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BOY WONDER

RORY MCILROY IS HEADING INTO THE RYDER CUP AS THE NO. 1 GOLFER IN THE WORLD, BUT DON'T TRY TO TELL HIM THAT PAGE 37

VANCOUVER metro
Thursday, September 27, 2012
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Politicians vote pro-pot

Marijuana. B.C.'s municipal leaders elect to work toward decriminalizing weed

British Columbia's municipal politicians have waded into the national marijuana debate by voting in favour of decriminalizing pot and studying the benefits of taxing and regulating it.

Mayors and councillors attending the annual Union of B.C. Municipalities convention were backed Wednesday by the Victoria-area community of Metchosin to support marijuana decriminalization during a stirring debate in the crowded convention hall.

"I tried it when I was younger, and I turned out OK," said Prince George Coun. Brian Skakun.

Skakun was representing the majority voice among politicians who said it was time B.C. did something to counter the violent control organized crime has over the marijuana industry, estimated to be worth $7 billion annually.

But former federal fisheries minister Tom Siddon, now a regional district politician from the B.C. Interior, spoke against decriminalization of marijuana, saying that would send the wrong message to young people.

"This is not a remedy," he said.

Siddon said organized criminals would not be deterred from selling pot and resorting to violence to protect their commodity.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

More reaction, page 6

Quoted

"I tried it when I was younger, and I turned out OK."

Prince George Coun. Brian Skakun

A crowd celebrates 4/20 at the Vancouver Art Gallery on April 20, 2010. The province's municipal politicians have thrown their support behind decriminalizing marijuana. KRISTEN THOMPSON/METRO FILE

Environment minister sued

Conservation groups team up to protect threatened species along proposed pipeline route PAGE 4

Referees lockout over

The NFL and the referees' union reached a tentative eight-year contract agreement PAGE 37

What does your freedom look like?
Turn to page 9.

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Housing-affordability team shares its recommendations

Task force. After 10 months of research and consultations, a report is produced

KATE WEBB
kate.webb@metronews.ca

Thin streets, high-density zoning along transit arteries and the formation of a housing authority are going ahead if council green-lights the final recommendations of the city's housing-affordability task force.

The 18-member task force, co-chaired by Mayor Gregor Robertson and former B.C. Liberal cabinet minister Olga Ilich, released its final report Wednesday after 10 months of research and public consultations.

If adopted, council will be able to consider applications for duplexes, row houses and stacked townhouses within 1.5 blocks of transit arteries and neighbourhood hubs.

Deputy city manager David McLellan, who authored the report, said it's one of staff's highest priorities.

"Say you wanted to consider townhouses on a stretch of, for example, Fraser Street, and the plan that's in place for that area doesn't anticipate townhouses. This allows the council to consider an application of that type, provided that they're going to be driving the affordability agenda," he explained.

Only low- to mid-rise rental and condo developments would be considered under the new rules, and condos would have to be sold for at least 20 per cent below market value and include legal mechanisms to maintain that level of affordability over time.

"I think there's a pent-up demand for this," McLellan said. "We see this type of product being built all over our suburbs — you know, Surrey and Richmond. It's definitely a housing form that people want to have."

The report also recommends work begin immediately on thin streets pilot projects in the Marpole, Grandview-Woodland and West End neighbourhoods. The thin-streets concept was submitted by two seasoned urban planners as part of the task force's re:THINK Housing competition. It would halve the spaces between property lines across streets and laneways, creating thin parcels of land on which new homes could be built.

The pilots could start out with just 12 lots, McLellan said, but, if spread throughout the city, it could lead to the construction of an estimated 10,000 homes, tapping into more than $2 billion in land value.

Council will debate the report at its next regular meeting on Tuesday.

Another point

- A city-run housing authority, another of the report's recommendations, would oversee the city's non-market housing stock and develop land for social and affordable housing.

It's best to be prepared for a water rescue

Emergency personnel pull a dummy out of a submerged car during a vehicles-in-water training exercise in Pemberton on Wednesday. The event is said to be the first of its kind in this country, with first responders from Western Canada taking part. JONATHAN HAYWARD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

1 NEWS

On the web

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Kitsilano closure. UBCM calls for meetings with feds over coast-guard cuts

An "overwhelming majority" of delegates at the Union of BC Municipalities convention voted Wednesday to call for meetings with the federal government over its plan to close the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station and reduce staff at four others.

The motion comes on the heels of a similar resolution passed by the City of Vancouver last week, in which council unanimously opposed the cuts.

"This wasn't a close vote," said UBCM spokesman Paul Taylor, although he couldn't say who was opposed as the resolution was put to an informal vote by a show of hands.

The closure is expected to double the coast guard's response time to at least 30 minutes.

KATE WEBB/METRO

Calls

350

The Kitsilano station responds to about 350 calls per year, about 100 of which are considered serious, according to a report released last week.

Investigation. IIO not concerned about notification delay

The civilian-led Independent Investigation Office isn't worried that it took Penticton RCMP four days to notify them about a woman who sustained serious injury during a police incident.

On Sept. 21, RCMP were responding to a 911 call about a woman in emotional distress.

During the incident, the woman allegedly jumped off a balcony while being talked down by police.

She remains in hospital after suffering injuries from the fall. Apparently, no force was used by police.

Although the IIO is supposed to be notified immediately in the case of a police-involved injury, the Surrey-based independent investigators weren't told about the incident until Sept. 25.

Quoted

"This was a unique circumstance. No force was (used on the woman), however she did suffer serious injury while police were present."

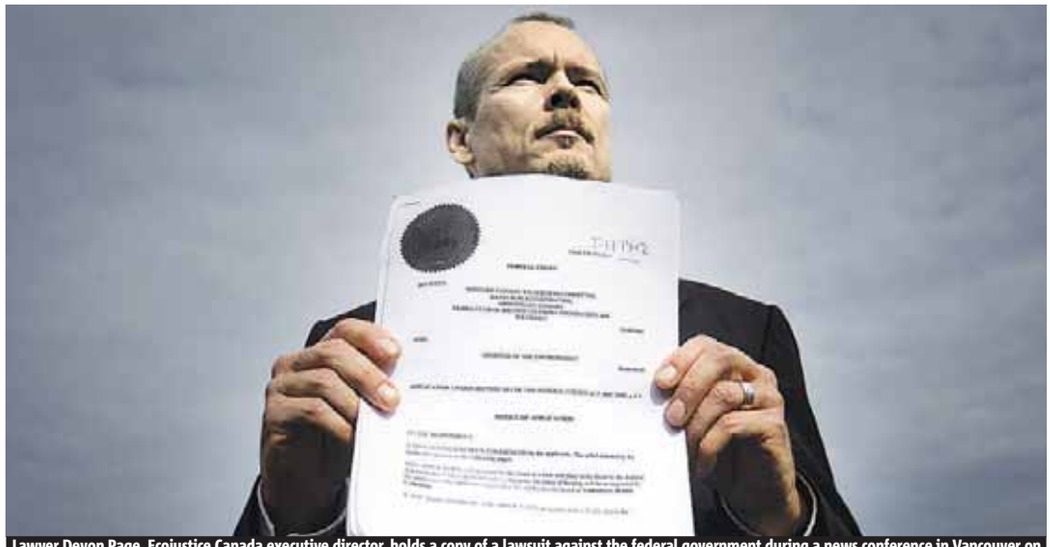
IIO spokesperson Owen Court

IIO spokesperson Owen Court says his office isn't concerned by the delay.

"I think there was a lack of clarity of what kind of circumstances were involved in this case," said Court.

A team of IIO investigators was sent to Penticton Wednesday to interview those involved in the incident.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO



Lawyer Devon Page, Ecojustice Canada executive director, holds a copy of a lawsuit against the federal government during a news conference in Vancouver on Wednesday. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Feds sued to protect endangered species

Northern Gateway. Ecojustice hopes to force federal minister to implement recovery strategies along proposed pipeline

A coalition of conservation groups is suing the federal environment minister to try and force Ottawa to protect endangered and threatened species along the route of the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline in British Columbia.

Quoted

"I think we really do believe that we have studied these things and will be vetting them through the regulatory-hearing process."

Steve Wuori, Enbridge's president of liquids pipelines

The applications filed in Federal Court in Vancouver ask the court to order the federal minister to implement recovery strategies for the Pacific humpback whale, the Nechako white sturgeon, the marbled murrelet and the southern mountain caribou. That would compel the government to protect their critical habitat.

The groups say Environment Minister Peter Kent's ongoing refusal to do so violates the federal Species At Risk Act.

"The recovery strategies for all four of these species are at least three years past the mandatory, statutory deadline set out in the (act)," said Sean Nixon, the lawyer for EcoJustice, a non-profit environmental justice group representing the Western Canada Wilderness Committee, the David Suzuki Foundation, Greenpeace Canada, the Sierra Club and Wildsight.

"In our view this isn't just a technical breach of the law. The federal government's delay in completing recovery strategies is further endangering species that are already endangered or threatened."

There currently are 87 recovery strategies that are more than five years overdue.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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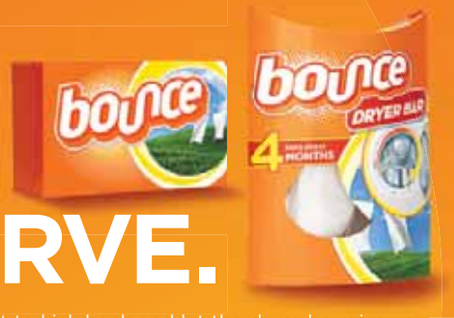

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Health care. B.C. reaches contract with nurses, includes wage increase

British Columbia's nurses have reached a tentative agreement with the provincial government that includes a small wage increase.

Health Minister Margaret MacDiarmid won't say what the increase is worth, but she says the agreement offers solutions that benefit the health system, including the addition of new nurses.

The agreement was reached under the government's co-operative-gains mandate, which is an effort to get both sides looking at ways of saving money that can then go towards wage increases.

Taxpayers aren't on the hook and services aren't reduced. The deal, which must be ratified, is a bright patch in a rocky set of public-sector negotiations that have seen one-day strikes and other job action. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Restraint coming

Earlier this month, Finance Minister Mike de Jong announced that a round of restraint is on its way, in part because dropping natural-gas prices have cost the government $1.1 billion in revenue.

Pipeline talk

Clark invites Redford for chat

Premier Christy Clark has invited Alberta's premier, Alison Redford, to sit down for a chat about the proposed Northern Gateway pipeline when Clark is in Calgary next week. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Highway of Tears

Victim's family seeks clues

A spokeswoman for the family of 19-year-old Gale Ann Weys has issued a public plea in Kamloops for information on the man who may have killed her in the mid-1970s. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Emery high on UBCM marijuana motion

Symbolic vote. UBCM agrees to support the decriminalization of marijuana

MATT KIELTYKA
matt.kieltyka@metronews.ca

The Union of B.C. Municipalities' support for decriminalizing marijuana is a "turning point," according to activist Jodie Emery.

The UBCM voted in favour of decriminalizing the drug during their annual general meeting in Victoria Wednesday.

Despite being mostly a symbolic gesture — since all municipalities can do is lobby the federal government for change — Emery said having the support of the province's mayors and council represent a change in the debate on pot.

"It's definitely a strong statement that the UBCM have given the federal government," said Emery, a Green party candidate in several elections and the wife of jailed Marc "Prince of Pot" Emery. "It represents a change, where it's not just pot activists demanding the end of prohibition. We're now seeing high-profile people in mainstream and political arenas stepping up and adding their voice."

Marc and Jodie Emery hand out pamphlets in October 2008. The UBCM has voted in favour of decriminalizing marijuana, much to the delight of Jodie Emery, the wife of the jailed "Prince of Pot." RAFE ARNOTT/METRO FILE

The UBCM resolution is just the latest show of support for decriminalizing and regulating marijuana in the province.

Stop the Violence B.C. and Sensible B.C. are two growing coalitions advocating for reform in the province.

Its members include law-enforcement officials, current and former mayors, academics and public-health officials.

"I commend our municipal representatives for showing leadership in taking steps towards changing a policy that has clearly failed to protect the health and safety of our community," said Dr. Evan Wood, founder of Stop the Violence B.C. and co-director of the B.C. Centre for Excellence in HIV/AIDS' Urban Health research Initiative.

"Research to date indicates that a system for strict regulation will best impede the illegal market for marijuana and combat the organized-crime gangs that profit from it."

Evans spoke at a UBCM panel session Monday devoted to the debate ahead of the vote.

Quoted

"It represents a change, where it's not just pot activists demanding the end of prohibition."
Jodie Emery, marijuana activist

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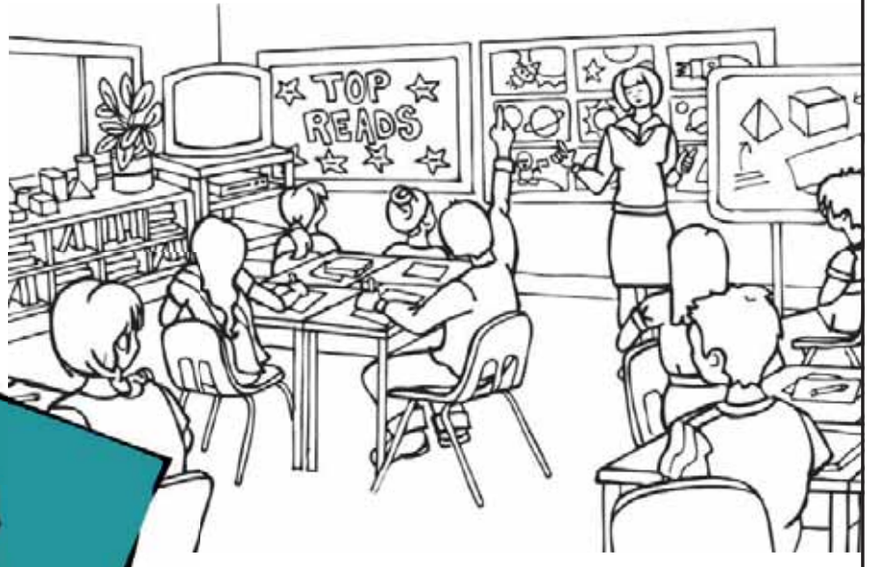

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A message from the Surrey Teachers' Association

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4912 62 St
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19638 Fraser Hwy
19700 Langley Bypass
19971 96 Ave
20159 88th Ave
20202 66th Ave
Maple Ridge
Haney Place Mall
22661 Lougheed Hwy
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No. 1 riot suspect arrested in Sask.

'Most elusive'. Riot investigation team tracked alleged Stanley Cup rioter across three provinces

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
phylicia.torrevillas@metronews.ca

Vancouver police have nabbed their "most elusive" alleged Stanley Cup rioter.

Members of the Integrated Riot Investigation Team flew to Saskatchewan Tuesday and arrested Jonathan Stephen Mahoney, 24, at his workplace in Lanigan.

Mahoney is the 15th and final suspect accused of beating and knocking Good Samaritan Robert Mackay to the ground after trying to protect The Bay store from being smashed and looted during the riot.

The disturbing footage of Mackay's attack went viral, causing a lot of outrage from the public in the days following the June 15 riot.

Approved charges

433

So far, the Crown has approved 433 criminal charges against 156 suspected rioters.

Vancouver Police Department Insp. Laurence Rankin said Wednesday that officers were tracking Mahoney, who was the Integrated Riot Investigation Team's No. 1 target, through Manitoba, Newfoundland and finally Saskatchewan.

The Newfoundland native was flown back to Vancouver Wednesday afternoon.

He faces charges of participating in a riot, assault, assault with a weapon and two counts of mischief.

The VPD also announced that police have recommended 200 criminal charges against 50 more suspected rioters, bringing the total to 872 charges against 275 people.

Good Samaritan Robert Mackay is honoured outside The Bay last July for his efforts to stop hooligans from smashing up The Bay department store during the Stanley Cup riot. MATT KIELTKA/METRO FILE

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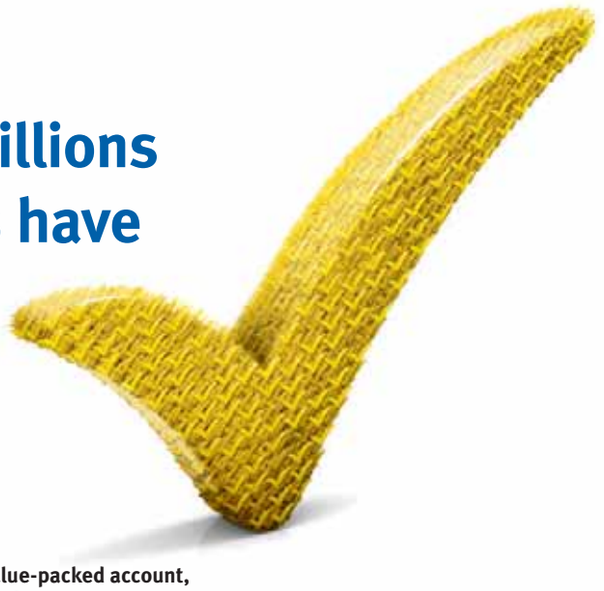

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Drugs. Surrey man allegedly sold THC-laced candies to Kelowna kids

A 29-year-old Surrey man faces possible drug-possession charges after allegedly luring kids with candy laced with THC in Kelowna.

Police arrested the man in late August at the corner of Richter Street and Leon Avenue after reports that he was selling drugs to young kids from his Ford Mustang.

A small bag of suspicious root beer-flavoured candies was seized and sent to a lab for testing. Results came back positive for THC (tetrahydrocannabinol), the agent that makes you high when you're smoking or consuming marijuana.

RCMP Const. Kris Clark said this is the first he's encountered candy laced with THC.

"The location of where it was happening was a block away from the Boys and Girls Club, which usually deals with troubled youth," he said.

The man is not known to Kelowna police, Clark added.

The man was originally released without charges, but now faces a potential charge of possession of a controlled substance.

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS/METRO

A bag of candy laced with THC. SUBMITTED/RCMP

Boating incident

Leighton Lake drowning victim identified

The coroners service has identified a man who drowned in a boating incident on Leighton Lake, west of Kamloops.

He is 64-year-old James Cecil Smith of Sorrento.

Smith had been fishing yesterday from a boat on the lake in the Tunkwa Provincial Park and was heard calling for help.

Despite efforts by witnesses and emergency personnel to resuscitate him, Smith could not be revived.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Theft

Mounties search for coin collector

Mounties in Langley are hoping a coin collector whose stash may have been stolen will come forward to claim it.

Cp.l Holly Marks says the large variety of distinctive coins from different countries was recovered in a backpack when a man was stopped for driving while prohibited.

The arrest of the Abbotsford man, who was with a passenger, occurred back in August.

Neither of them claimed ownership of the backpack, so possession-of-stolen-property charges weren't recommended.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Bust leads to hundreds of stolen credit cards

Search and seizure.
Personal info may have been swiped from retail hard drives

MATT KIELTYKA
matt.kieltyka@metronews.ca

One woman is facing charges after Chilliwack RCMP shut down an alleged fraud ring.

Approximately 1,000 stolen or fraudulent credit cards, drivers' licences, care card, SIN cards and firearms licences were seized Sept. 19 when Mounties obtained a search warrant for a home in the 46300 block of Yale Road in Chilliwack.

Cpl. Kurt Bosnell said the bust was bigger than anticipated, with police tracing the stolen cards back to thefts between 2009 and 2012.

"The scope of this was bigger than we anticipated," said Bosnell.

Many of the cards were stolen in dozens of break-and-enters and thefts from vehicles in Chilliwack and the Fraser Valley. Most disturbingly though, Bosnell said, a lot of the personal information was gleaned from hard drives stolen from retail stores.

The suspects pulled credit card numbers and personal information off the hard drives, then researched the names online (on sites like Facebook) to create full fraudulent profiles and IDs, Bosnell said.

Not only did the criminals have access to people's valid credit cards, they also manufactured fake IDs replacing the victim's photo with the suspect's so that the user could use the credit cards and even apply for new ones under the victim's name.

All the thefts eventually added up, according to Bosnell.

"We investigated other frauds and the same name kept popping up," said Bosnell.

Facing charges is 40-year-old Chilliwack resident Dawn Robberstad.

A photo illustration shows major U.S. credit cards. Around 1,000 stolen or fraudulent credit cards were seized by the RCMP recently. GETTY IMAGES

Everyone's Empire.
Park board 'pleased' with new rec-area plans

The future of Hastings Park is in good hands, according to a Vancouver park board commissioner ahead of a critical vote for the park.

The board will meet Oct. 1 to vote on the final concept plan for Empire Fields, the Plateau Sports Park and greenways at Hastings Park.

Since city council approved the Hastings Park/PNE Master Plan in 2010, staff have been consulting with community groups and piecing together plans to triple the amount of park space at the site in a bid to create an inclusive, diverse "Fair in a Park."

The final product sports 76 acres of year-round park space that includes new turf fields, greenways, bikeways, playgrounds and beach sports areas.

Parking at the site, formerly home to Empire Field, will be extended along with the Leeside skate park.

Proposed greenways for Hastings Park and Empire Fields. CONTRIBUTED

"I'm really pleased with the progress and these plans for an exciting new park for Vancouver," said park board commissioner Sarah Blythe. "Staff put a lot of work into this. We've consulted with all the user groups we could have and I think it looks great."

If approved, the total project is expected to cost $8.5 million, which is already provided for in the 2011 and 2012 capital budgets.

MATT KIELTYKA/METRO

Wild car chase

Woman shot by cops lost a kidney; now out on bail

The 18-year-old woman who was shot by police in July as she crouched in the back of a pickup fleeing from officers near West Kelowna has had her kidney removed. Ashley Collins was hit in the back by a police bullet and spent more than seven weeks in hospital, undergoing two surgeries, including the one that removed a kidney.

Collins is now living in Kelowna after being released on bail, and her lawyer says she can walk and is recovering — although he notes she was lucky she was not hit in the head. Collins and two men are each charged with three counts of attempted murder after a wild car chase and shoot-out. KELOWNA DAILY COURIER/THE CANADIAN PRESS

City limits

Bear encounters on the rise in Kamloops

A Kamloops conservation officer says he has never seen so many confrontations between humans and bears in the southern Interior city.

Darcy MacPhee says even though Kamloops is the province's first BearSmart community, vigilance has been slipping.

He says eight bears have been transported to a rehab centre in Smithers this year.

On Sunday night, MacPhee says a sow and one cub had to be destroyed — while two other cubs were relocated — when the mother bear began acting aggressively within city limits. CFJC/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Ambrose feels pro-life heat

Bill defeated. But Status of women minister criticized after she votes in favour of it

A Tory MP's landmark pro-life bid was defeated in the House of Commons on Wednesday night — and the prime minister helped torpedo it.

Stephen Harper voted against the motion to have Parliament study the definition of a human being.

But 10 ministers voted to keep the debate alive.

Quoted

"Mr. Harper can't have it both ways. He can't claim that he's against reopening the abortion debate and having a sitting minister vote in favour of reopening the abortion debate."

Thomas Mulcair,
NDP leader

Public Works and Status of Women minister Rona Ambrose was among the members of cabinet who rose to vote in favour of Stephen Woodworth's private motion — and was roundly criticized for it.

"It's unacceptable," said NDP MP Niki Ashton.

"Stephen Harper told us his government wasn't willing to reopen the debate and you have the minister in charge of the Status of Women voting (in favour)."

The motion was defeated by a vote of 203-91.

Harper had called Woodworth's motion "unfortunate," and in the spring said he would vote against it because of his party's electoral commitment to not re-open the debate on abortion.

But more than 80 Conservative MPs did not appear to view their vote as a contradiction to the election promise.

Woodworth said he hopes his supporters will keep up the pressure on MPs. "I hope that people … will be moved to advocate that we enshrine in Canadian law the inherent worth and dignity of every human being," he said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Status of Women Minister Rona Ambrose, pictured on Monday, voted in favour of the controversial pro-life motion on Wednesday. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stephen Woodworth

MP wants to protect the unborn

When does human life begin?

Currently, the Criminal Code defines a child as a human only after it emerges alive from the mother's body at birth.

Stephen Woodworth, below, and his supporters point out that the landmark 1988 ruling confirming abortion rights in Canada also noted the potential need to protect unborn babies at some point during a pregnancy.

Will it be Trudeau Tuesday? Justin plays coy

Media magnet Justin Trudeau speaks briefly as he enters a Liberal caucus meeting in Ottawa on Wednesday. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Justin Trudeau's star power was on display Wednesday as reports of his imminent entry into the Liberal leadership race sparked a media frenzy on Parliament Hill.

But the 40-year-old Montreal MP coyly refused to confirm or deny reports that he'll announce his bid Tuesday in his Papineau riding.

A phalanx of television cameras and outstretched microphones besieged Liberals outside their usually quiet weekly caucus meeting.

It was a testament to Trudeau's celebrity status and magnetic ability to attract attention.

"Thank you very much for your interest," he said on his way out of the meeting.

"I'm pleased to hear all the buzz and all the interest in the Liberal party's fortunes."

"But I have nothing further today … I promise I will let you know when I have something to announce."

Trudeau's crowd-pleasing celebrity is his most appealing quality for many Liberals, who are desperate to avoid sinking into oblivion after being reduced to a third-party rump in the 2011 election.

It has already made him the virtual front-runner in a leadership race that hasn't yet officially begun and won't culminate until April 14.

However, others are waiting to see if there's more to Trudeau than a pretty face and boyish charm.

Those close to him are well aware that he must disprove critics who maintain he's a lightweight coasting on the coattails of his late father, Liberal icon and former prime minister Pierre Trudeau. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Background

Some folksy facts about Justin Trudeau:

- **Birth.** He was born on Christmas Day, 1971. Brother Sacha was born two years later on the same day.
- **Marriage.** He is married to former Quebec TV personality and model Sophie Grégoire. They have two children.

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Key ingredient in bath salts drug now illegal

Alleviating confusion. The government says people shouldn't confuse the street drug's name with legitimate bath products

The federal government is banning a key ingredient found in the street drug known as bath salts.

The compound, called MDPV, will now be treated the same as cocaine or heroin.

Health Minister Leona Aglukkaq says the new rules make it illegal to possess, traffic, import or export the substance.

The compound can be used in legitimate research if authorized by regulation.

The minister says the decision to ban MDPV follows concerns expressed by health officials about the health and safety risks associated with its use.

Playing with your head

The bath-salts street drug is said to have mind-altering properties.

She says police and the Canada Border Services Agency are also concerned about the substance's growing popularity and availability.

The government stressed that people shouldn't confuse MDPV and its street name with legitimate bath products.

The Canadian Association of Chiefs of Police welcomed the ban, calling it "an important step in stopping organized criminal groups from acquiring and profiting from this illegal substance."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Minister of Health Leona Aglukkaq pauses during a news conference announcing that the government has banned a key ingredient in the drug known as bath salts. ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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$3.1M lawsuit. Manitoba pharmacy misrepresented NIHB claims: Ottawa

A Prairie pharmacist and his former drug store face a multi-million-dollar lawsuit from the federal government over allegations they fleeced the aboriginal health-benefits plan.

A newly released report and documents filed in a Manitoba court allege Murvin Abas and Fisher Pharmacy submitted phoney claims to the Non-Insured Health Benefits program, overcharged for some products and had excessively high dispensing fees.

Ottawa is now suing Abas and the pharmacy for $3.1 million.

In a statement of claim filed in January, the government alleges Abas "fraudulently and negligently misrepresented information and claims" submitted to the NIHB program.

"Abas made the representations of false and inaccurate claims to the NIHBP fraudulently in that he knew the representations were false or he was reckless in not caring whether they were true or false and that Canada relied on the false or reckless misrepresentations in reimbursing Abas Pharmacy for the claims submitted under the NIHBP," the government alleges in its statement of claim.

None of the allegations have been proven in court, and a statement of defence has yet to be filed.

Abas declined to discuss his case during a brief telephone interview.

"This is all before the courts right now, and we're working through it," he said. "At this point, we can't just openly discuss details because it is being discussed in detail with the court and the lawyers."

In a January 2009 article in the Interlake Spectator, however, Abas defended himself and criticized Health Canada for revoking his NIHB program provider number, which allowed him to claim for his services.

"It's like (Health Canada) thinks the First Nations are their customers, not mine, so they pull numbers based on their analysis instead of working with people like myself," Abas told the newspaper.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Investigation

The claims are the latest to surface as part of a months-long investigation by The Canadian Press into alleged wrongdoing involving federal money for aboriginal health care. Those allegations include:

- **Grocery shopping.** Staff at a remote nursing station in northern Ontario allegedly authorized expensive medical flights to go grocery shopping.
- **Alleged misuse.** A New Brunswick First Nations health centre where half a million dollars that came from federal contribution agreements was allegedly misappropriated.

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Uruguay legalizes abortion in a squeaker vote

People in favour. President will allow it to become law if Senate approves; bill allows a legal abortion in first 12 weeks

Legislators have voted in Uruguay by a razor-thin margin to legalize abortion.

In Latin America, where the majority of people are Roman Catholic, no country except Cuba has made abortions accessible to all women during the first trimester of pregnancy.

The vote in Uruguay's Chamber of Deputies passed just before midnight Tuesday after several lawmakers on each side of the debate said they could not in good conscience go along with their parties, and allowed substitutes to vote in their stead.

President Jose Mujica says he will allow it to become law, if the Senate approves the changes.

The Senate already has approved an even more liberal version of the landmark abortion measure.

The Chamber of Deputies' legislation would give women the right to a legal abortion during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, and decriminalize later-term abortions when the mother's life is at risk or when the fetus is so deformed that it wouldn't survive after birth. In cases of rape, abortions would be legal during the first 14 weeks.

Deputy Pablo Abdala of the opposition National Party vowed Wednesday to promote a popular referendum to overturn the law, if Mujica doesn't veto it, calling the measure a violation of human rights.

However, polls suggest many more Uruguayans favour abortion rights than oppose them.

A survey this month showed 52 per cent of Uruguayans would vote to legalize abortion if the question were put to the people, while 34 per cent would vote against it. The survey was of 802 people.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The power of one

1

Passing by a single vote: Legislators voted 50-49 to legalize abortion in Uruguay.

German Catholics

Religious taxes must be paid to be in the church

Germany's top administrative court has ruled that Catholics who opt out of paying religious taxes must automatically leave the church as well.

The court's verdict Wednesday is a victory for the Catholic Church in Germany, which receives more than $5.14 billion annually from a surcharge of up to nine per cent on income-tax bills of registered Catholics. Germany's bishops announced last week that believers who refuse to pay the tax won't be able to receive the sacraments, become godparents or have a religious funeral.

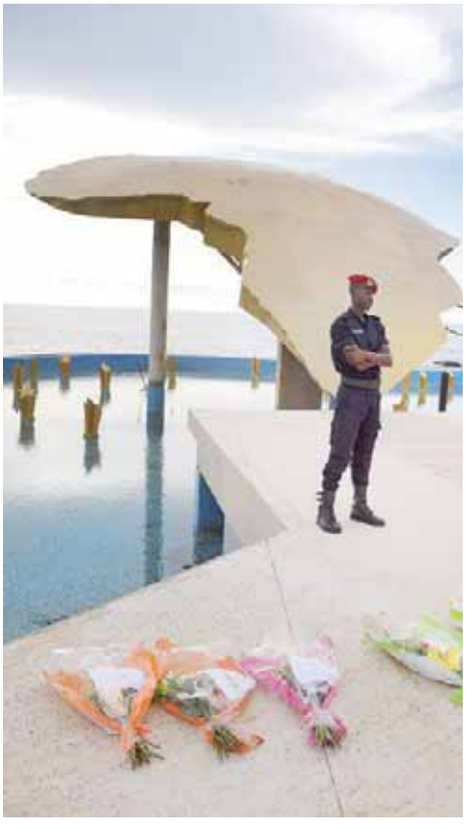
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indian Kashmir

Cops use batons on paramedics

Police in Indian-controlled Kashmir used batons to disperse hundreds of female paramedic students protesting recent exam results.

The students were demanding that their tests be rechecked after nearly 5,000 students out of 7,000 failed. Police said at least four students were injured. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



Remembering the Joola 10 years on

Bouquets of flowers lie in front of a sculpture of the African continent at the edge of the Atlantic Ocean, following a ceremony commemorating the tenth anniversary of the 2002 Joola ferry disaster, in Dakar, Senegal, Wednesday. With an official death toll of 1,863 and just 64 survivors, the Joola remains one of the deadliest disasters in maritime history. REBECCA BLACKWELL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Egypt newspaper opts for cartoons in response to perceived insults to Islam

Non-violent protest. Daily newspaper Al Watan says the move was 'a civilized reaction to all that has happened'

Egyptian cartoonist Khalid Abdul-Ati holds a copy of the Egyptian Al Watan daily newspaper with a two-page spread of cartoons with a headline in Arabic that reads 'nothing cracks cartoons but cartoons,' inside his office at the newspaper's headquarters in Cairo, Egypt, Wednesday. NASSER NASSER/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Amid outrage sparked by perceived insults to Islam, one Egyptian newspaper has decided to fight cartoons with cartoons.

Al Watan daily says it is responding to the crude caricatures published last week by a satirical Parisian weekly in kind: a series of sketches critiquing relations between the Arab world and the West.

The paper says they are a "civilized" alternative to the violent protests across the Muslim world sparked by a low-budget anti-Islam film produced in the United States.

"Nothing cracks cartoons but cartoons," said the banner splashed over the two-page spread published this week.

One drawing, captioned "Western glasses for the Islamic world," features a pair of eyeglasses framing the burning World Trade Center towers.

Another shows a flashlight wrapped in an American flag pointed at a picture of an angry turbaned man with a knife, ignoring a peaceful Muslim.

Both seem intended to suggest that the only image seen by Western audiences of the Muslim world was that of terrorism. Mohamed El Barguti, an editor at Al Watan, told The Associated Press on Wednesday that the cartoons were a "model of a civilized reaction to all that has happened." The paper published the drawings to show that "burning and killing" is not the proper response to insults to Islam, he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Freedom of expression

The newspaper's decision comes amid a debate over freedom of expression in both Muslim and Western countries over the reaction to the film, Innocence of Muslims.

- **Violence.** Over 50 people have been killed in violence linked to the video over the past two weeks. In Egypt, protesters breached the U.S. Embassy.
- **Provocation.** Last week, the provocative French magazine Charlie Hebdo published a set of crude cartoons playing off the film and ridiculing the violent reaction to it.
- **Response.** President Barack Obama and other Western officials have condemned the film, but said that no speech justifies the violent response.

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Red Bull heir pays victim's family members

Paid off. Energy drink heir still faces criminal charges after allegedly killing police officer with Ferrari in Bangkok

The billionaire family of a Red Bull energy-drink heir accused of killing a police officer in a hit-and-run accident paid the officer's siblings about $100,000 in a deal aimed at avoiding a civil lawsuit, police said Wednesday.

Vorayuth Yoovidhya, 27, is charged with driving a Ferrari that struck the officer and dragged his body down a Bangkok street earlier this month.

The Yoovidhya family paid the officer's siblings three million baht ($97,000 US) last week, police Lt. Col. Viradon Thubthimdee said. He said the settlement will protect Vorayuth from a civil lawsuit.

Vorayuth Yoovidhya is taken away for investigation after hitting and killing a police officer with his Ferrari. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

"We sometimes call this a 'funeral fee.' If the victim's party is satisfied with the amount of money, then they will not seek compensation through a court," Viradon said.

The payment, however, does not protect Vorayuth from criminal charges of causing death by reckless driving and fleeing to avoid arrest. If convicted, he faces up to 10 years in jail and a fine of 20,000 baht ($666).

The payment from the extremely wealthy family is also unlikely to quell public outrage over the incident and an initial attempt to cover up Vorayuth's alleged involvement by arresting a bogus suspect.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Preserving science

A worker hangs on the side of the geodesic dome roof of the Science World building while performing maintenance in Vancouver on Wednesday. The building was constructed for the 1986 World's Fair.

DARRYL DICK/THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Iran's Ahmadinejad talks, Canadians walk out again

United Nations.
Tensions run high at UN meeting only weeks after Canada closed embassy in Iran

Canadian diplomats walked out Wednesday as Mahmoud Ahmadinejad subjected the United Nations to more of his trademark political vitriol, but the Iranian president brushed off Canada's anti-Iran bent even as Tehran warned its citizens to avoid the country for fear of rampant "Iranophobia."

It wasn't the first time the Canadian delegation has walked out on Ahmadinejad — they did it last year and in 2009 at the United Nations annual gathering of world leaders.

But tensions are running higher than ever between the two countries after Foreign Affairs Minister John Baird shuttered Canada's embassy in Iran three weeks ago.

"We will not sit silently in our chairs and listen to Iran's hateful, anti-Western, anti-Semitic views," Baird's press secretary, Rick Roth, said.

"If anything, today's address only reinforces our decision earlier this month to suspend diplomatic relations with Iran."

Ahmadinejad was dismissive of Canada in a news conference following his speech to the UN.

"I fundamentally don't see this as a very important issue. Of course we did not have a substantial economic relationship with Canada," he said.

Ahmadinejad didn't mention Canada by name during his speech, but a statement was posted Wednesday by the Islamic Republic News Agency, Iran's official news agency. The statement, attributed to Iran's Foreign Ministry, warned Iranian citizens against travelling to Canada, citing "Islamophobia," "Iranophobia" and a "double standard" in Canada towards human rights.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad gestures at the United Nations General Assembly Wednesday. JASON DECROW/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Morsi: Won't rest until Syrian civil war ends

Egypt's new President Mohammed Morsi, making his debut on the global stage at the United Nations, said Wednesday that he will not rest until the civil war in Syria is brought to an end.

He called the fighting there, which opposition groups say has killed at least 30,000 people, the "tragedy of the age" and one that "we all must end." And he invited all nations to join an effort to stop the bloodshed that began about 18 months ago when opposition figures rose up against President Bashar Assad's regime.

Morsi, an Islamist and key figure in the once-banned Muslim Brotherhood, opened his remarks to the U.N. General Assembly by celebrating himself as Egypt's first democratically elected leader who was swept into office after what he called a "great, peaceful revolution."

He said the first issue for the world body should be certifying the rights of the Palestinian people.

"The fruits of dignity and freedom must not remain far from the Palestinian people," he said, adding that it was "shameful" that U.N. resolutions are not enforced.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Mohammed Morsi. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Analysis

Iran's leader politically wounded

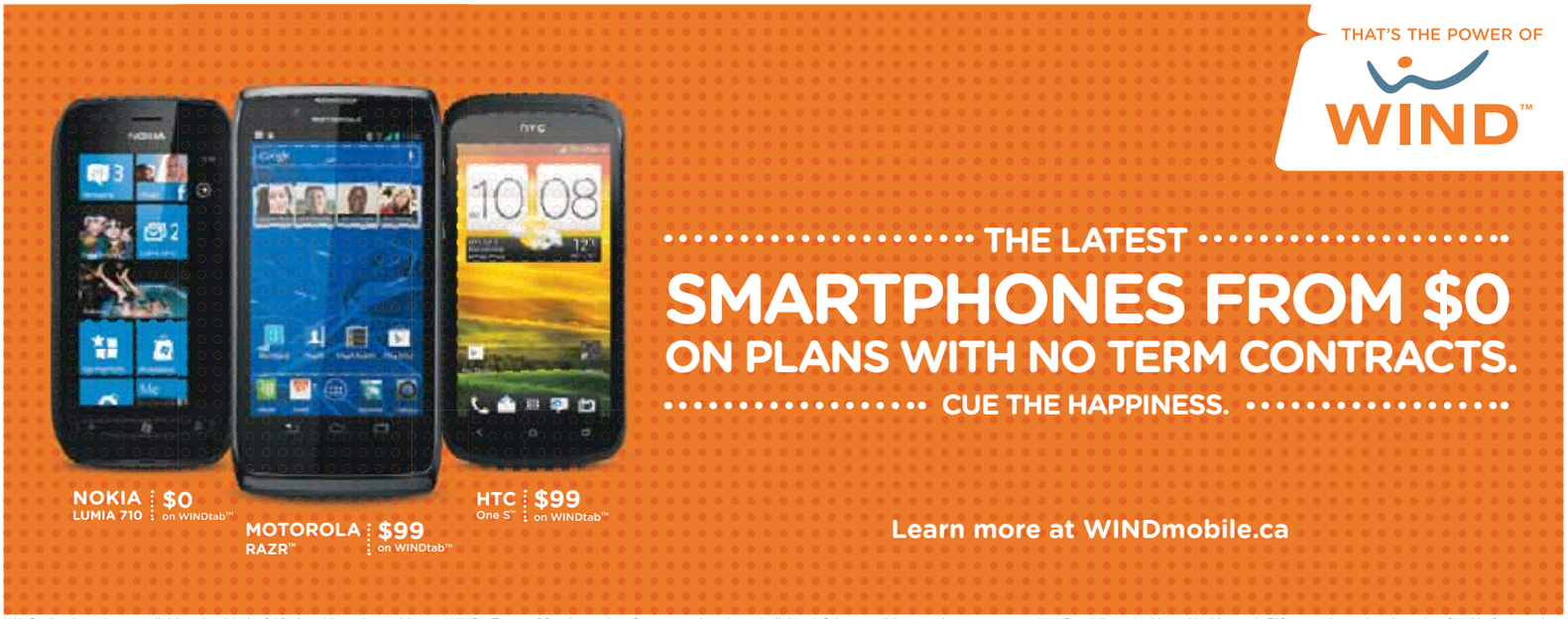
Iran's president has no trouble making himself heard: rumbling through the UN's annual world gathering this week with comments bashing homosexuality, describing Israel as a doomed misfit in the Middle East and predicting a rising tide against U.S. "bullying."

On one point, however, he is mum — his plans after elections next June that will close out his second and final term.

Mahmoud Ahmadinejad has so far dodged questions about possible post-presidential roles with cryptic replies or inscrutable silence. Yet this much is clear: Despite his bravado at the UN and other international forums, he heads into the last months of his presidency politically wounded at home from skirmishes with Iran's ruling system.

His departure as president also could lead to a more toned-down approach from Iran in general over its nuclear program and possible deal-making with the West, analysts say.

Iran's theocracy directs all key policies — including the pace of nuclear development and negotiations with the West — leaving the president, in theory, to shepherd domestic affairs and other issues. In reality, however, Ahmadinejad has reshaped the office into an international soapbox with messages that may or may not be sanctioned from the top. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS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Readership numbers. Metro jumps by 20% in Vancouver

It's official: Vancouverites love their Metro. In fact, according to results released yesterday, the Newspaper Audience Databank (NADbank) pegs Metro Vancouver daily readership at 241,400 — a whopping 20 per cent increase over last year. And Metro is now the number one newspaper with adults 18 to 34.

"This is fabulous news," says Steve Shrout, Vice President and Group Publisher, Metro Western Canada. "The value Metro brings to the city is being supported by our strong readership growth. We continue to align with the needs of the city and the results prove it. We especially recognize the support of our readers, advertisers and staff in helping us realize this kind of growth."

Almost 1.6 million Canadians across Canada read Metro every day, an increase of 247,400 readers over NADbank 2010-11 results.

"These results confirm the power of the Metro brand to deliver the news youthful, active metropolitans want," says Bill McDonald, President of Metro English Canada.

"We focus on a unique package of local, national and international news, plus lifestyle and entertainment news that matters to our readers. Add our enhanced distribution strategies and creative marketing initiatives and it is no wonder more Canadians than ever pick up Metro to start their day."

By the numbers

241,400

According to results released yesterday, the Newspaper Audience Databank (NADbank) pegs Metro Vancouver daily readership at 241,400.

Pork out. U.K. farm group forecasts bacon shortage

A British farming organization is predicting a worldwide shortage of bacon and pork next year.

The National Pig Association says global drought conditions are driving up the price of grain, a major staple in hog feed. It says pig farmers around the world are selling their herds because retail prices are not rising fast enough to cover the cost of record-high pig-feed costs.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

In the U.S., the government has introduced a pork-buying program in a bid to keep its pig farmers in business. And the Chinese government is putting pork into cold storage, as a buffer against shortages and high prices next year.

Iowa-based agricultural economist Steve Meyer says he expects to see record prices for pork next year. He says high grain prices affect all meat suppliers, meaning beef, chicken and turkey supplies could also be affected.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Wanna take it outside? Take it online instead

'Wisdom of the crowd.' Dispute-resolution sites provide individuals and businesses with a faster, low-cost means for settling conflicts

Never mind telling your side of the story in court, or to your best friend. Cyber justice is starting to be dispensed to resolve civil disputes and personal disagreements. Sometimes it's left to ordinary folks to vote on winners and losers.

Take eQuibbly, for example. It lets people bring their personal and business disputes online — anything from complaints about loud music to boyfriends ogling other women to how restaurant tips should be shared.

Founder and president Lance Soskin cites the case of the ogling boyfriend and noted that people agreed with his fiancée that he should concentrate on her when they're out together.

The website eQuibbly is seen Wednesday in Montreal. It lets people bring their personal and business disputes online. RYAN REMIORZ/THE CANADIAN PRESS

"He responded with, 'Well I gave up my porn for her' and he thought that was quite an achievement," Soskin said from Toronto. "Eventually people on the site just convinced him he was being rude and uncouth."

Participants read both sides of an argument and vote on who wins the dispute, which Soskin called "crowd voting." The web application is free to its users and obviously does not deal with criminal cases or more serious matters like divorce.

Technology analyst Duncan Stewart said theoretically the "crowd" should be impartial.

"There's this whole wisdom of the crowd thing — a million people know more than one person no matter how smart that one person is," said Stewart, director of Deloitte Canada Research for Technology, Media and Telecommunications.

Stewart said eQuibbly does what has been done informally for years and added "even things that might be settled by the courts might start being settled by the crowd because they're better."

EQuibbly has a more serious side, though, which allows individuals and businesses to agree to a debate with a binding resolution.

Soskin sees shortfalls in the justice system that online dispute resolution might solve. The justice system is somewhat biased toward people who have money and time, he said.

"You can't go to court for a few hundred dollars," he said. "Most of the court systems in the U.S. and Canada are backlogged with thousands upon thousands upon thousands of cases."

The British Columbia government announced in May that it will set up an online tribunal to help people solve small civil claims outside court. It's expected to be in place by 2013-14 and save money on travel time and court costs.

"Once online dispute resolution is started, ongoing participation would be mandatory until a voluntary or binding settlement was reached," the B.C. government has said about the service. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR 101.50¢ (- 0.48¢)

TSX 12,232.86 (-24.32)

OIL $89.98 US (-$1.39)

GOLD $1,753.60 US (-$12.80)

Natural gas: $3.023 (+9.9¢)
Dow Jones: 13,413.51 (-44.04)

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A (BLOODY) THUMB GOES UP, A CAR GOES BY...

HE SAYS...
John Mazerolle
metronews.ca

After years of hitchhiking, my biggest tip is to never thumb with a bloody hand.

You might think that's stupid advice, perhaps suitable for some creature that doesn't even have opposable thumbs (which is why dogs so rarely hitchhike).

But, trust me, it's important.

Recently I've been hitchhiking Iceland, the country that leads the world in tourist spots that can actively kill you. (Typical sign: Welcome! Beware of steam explosions!)

I was on the one-lane "highway" heading from some death-by-ice attraction to some death-by-fire one, and several cars passed me. Not a big deal, but I decided to do my mental hitchhiking checklist.

- Standing where visible but too difficult to hit for points? Good.
- Eyes conveying 'Don't hate me, I'm not American'? Check.
- Looking outdoorsy but not serial-killersy? Whoops.

This is when I noticed my hand. A hangnail — throbbing from cold weather and gushing from a blood disorder I have — meant my right hand had gone all Carrie White. I looked like maybe I had pulled a Temple of Doom on one of the sheep wandering the roadside.

Hitchin' a ride

"I did have a first aid kit with me, but I forgot the first rule of first aid: Remember that you have a first aid kit with you."

I did have a first aid kit with me, but I forgot the first rule of first aid: Remember that you have a first aid kit with you.

Instead, I followed my memory from Boy Scouts and put a wet, woolen glove over top of it, which is probably what they would recommend. I'm not sure because I quit during Beavers.

After performing the medical equivalent of putting duct tape over the 'service engine' light, somebody eventually stopped. I don't think the driver was unnerved when he heard, "Don't be alarmed but there's a lot of blood on my hand." The nervous giggle afterward may have given him pause, though.

Thankfully it all worked out. It always does.

People are always talking about how dangerous hitchhiking is, and the travel book I brought — the offices of which are clearly ringed by rabid lawyers — goes so far as to say hitchhiking is 'not rewarding.' Of course hitchhiking has its dangers, but it seems a paranoid stance in a place where you're encouraged to swim in fault lines and volcanoes.

Hitching is one of the best ways to meet locals, it's cheap, and it's like love — when you find what you were looking for, you forget instantly about the long wait that came before.

Maybe the best thing about hitchhiking is that it's much easier than it seems. It's rare that something so easy to do elicits such instant wonder in people who never try it.

But the secret's out now, I suppose, so if you've never considered it before feel free to sully your virgin thumb. Get a written sign if you like, stand in a straightaway where drivers have enough time to decide to stop, and wear bright colours for safety's sake. I find a nice blood red really catches the eye.

Rule of thumb: Conceal the blood. ISTOCK

Who's at the wheel?

ERIC RISBERG/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Google auto

Driverless car gets green light

A driverless car is seen at Google headquarters in Mountain View, Calif. Google has been developing autonomous car technology and lobbying for the regulations for years.

The company says autonomous cars can make roads safer, free commuters from the drudgery of driving and reduce congestion.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

This many clicks

483,000

Google's fleet of a dozen computer-controlled vehicles — mostly Toyota Priuses equipped with self-driving technology — has logged more than 483,000 kilometres of self-driving without an accident, the company said.

Signed, sealed, driven

Legislation paves way for technology

Gov. Jerry Brown signed legislation earlier this week that will pave the way for driverless cars in California.

The legislation requires the California Department of Motor Vehicles to draft regulations for autonomous vehicles by Jan. 1, 2015. Currently, state law doesn't mention self-driving cars because the technology is so new.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

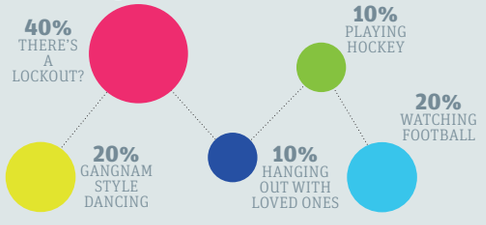
Drivers wanted

- Autonomous cars use computers, sensors and other technology to operate independently, but a "driver" can override the autopilot function any time.
- The regulations would allow vehicles to operate autonomously, but a licensed driver would still need to sit behind the wheel to serve as a backup operator.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

What will you replace watching hockey with during the NHL lockout?



Twitter

@GiantsHky: #Canucks rumor has it Dan Cloutier will be signing beach balls at Rogers Arena in #Vancouver today

@kikiday: Happy Birthday Daniel and Henrik Sedin! #Canucks

@jsean_kessy: HAPPY BIRTHDAY to the most amazing twins , Henrik and Daniel Sedin<3333 #Canucks #Vancity

@synthdrive: No Canucks Games to look forward to..,when will this lockout end?

@grabs40: let's go Europe haha "@jonathan_pepe: Going to be watching Ryder cup coverage all night. #usa #RyderCup"

@StVBC: We are thrilled to announce that #UBCM has voted in favour of Resolution A5 to lobby for cannabis policy reform herein. Such wonderful news!

metro
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10 TOP PRIZES OF $1,000 A WEEK FOR 25 YEARS!

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5 6 7

8 9 10

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SCENE 2

Cannes Palme d'Or-winning Amour will screen at VIFF. HANDOUT

Films coming soon (very soon) to a theatre near you

VIFF. 31st screening of the Vancouver International Film Festival starts tonight and lights up the city until October 12.

BACKSTAGE PASS
Graeme McRanor
vancouver@metronews.ca

Film buffs rejoice, for it's the most wonderful time of the year.

Yes, my silver-screen-loving, popcorn-popping, capsule-review-writing cinephiles, it's time for the 31st screening of the Vancouver International Film Festival.

VIFF gets bigger every year. Like my body.

But in a good way.

So much to see, so little time, which means it's important to be as efficient as possible when navigating this international onslaught of movie madness.

And while I can't guarantee you'll love every film you see (no endorsements here), I can offer a rough guide to aid in your epic journey down the long, dark aisle.

Here is that promised beacon of light:

Highlights from Cannes: Why fly to the south of France to watch the best its famous festival has to offer? Stay here, save some money and see these flicks at VIFF. Films like the Palme d'Or-winning Amour; the Grand Prix-winning Reality; Beyond the Hills, which took home Best Actress and Screenplay awards; and The Hunt, from Denmark, which got Cannes' Best Actor award. Use all that money you saved to stuff your pockets full of Twizzlers.

Animated films at VIFF: We're not talking Tom and Jerry here (although amazing in its own right). This year's festival features a truly international smorgasbord of animated films, including The Monkey King Uproar in Heaven 3D, which is a 50th anniversary 3D restoration of China's most-famous animated feature; A Liar's Autobiography: The Untrue Story of Monty Python's Graham Chapman; Cartoon College, a documentary that introduces the audience to world-renowned graphic novelists and a college in Vermont where the industry's future talent get ready to dazzle the world; and many more.

Music films at VIFF: Do you like music? Do you like films? Do you like films about music? Yes, yes and yes? Then this is your category. At least a couple of dozen films in this category, including the Canadian documentary I Am Not a Rock Star, which is about concert pianist Marika Bournaki, whom director Bobbi Jo Hart reportedly followed for more than eight years.

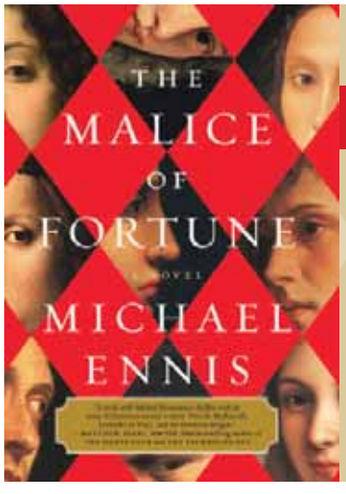
Too many films to fit in this space, really. And by that I mean this entire paper. Oh, and don't forget to check out all the Canadian films at the festival too. They need our support.

VIFF starts tonight and runs until October 12. For more information on the festival and a full schedule, visit VIFF.org.

On the web

Qriket

Edward Norton, Snoop Dogg among celebrities to play Words With Friends for charity.



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Leonardo da Vinci and Machiavelli join forces to end a killer's reign of terror

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– Matthew Pearl, author of *The Dante Club*

"A stunning work of historical fiction.... Addictively readable."
– Vincent Lam, author of *Bloodletting and Miraculous Cures* and *The Headmaster's Wager*

"A true masterpiece."
– Anne Fortier, author of *Juliet*

"Stands shoulder to shoulder with Umberto Eco's *Name of the Rose*."
– *Kirkus* (starred review)

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Five Facts on J.K. Rowling's new wizard-free novel

The Casual Vacancy. British author's first foray into adult fiction is expected to top the best-sellers list, despite her uncertainty

NED EHRBAR
Metro World News in Hollywood

Today marks the release of J.K. Rowling's The Casual Vacancy, her first book since the mega success of the Harry Potter franchise and her first foray into adult fiction. But details on the novel have been maddeningly hard to come by. Here's what we do know:

1. The plot is sprawling — and centres around death and politics
From what little information about the actual content of The Casual Vacancy that has been released, we know the story kicks off with the death of one Barry Fairbrother, a town council member in a seemingly perfect English village that's actually brimming with resentment and discord. The resulting election drama deals in class warfare, prostitution, heroin addiction and scandal — very un-Potter-like themes.

Quoted

"...If everyone says, 'Well, that's shockingly bad — back to wizards with you,' then obviously I won't be throwing a party. But I will live."
J.K Rowling

2. Hardly anyone has read it.
As interviewer Decca Aitkenhead notes in her profile of Rowling for the Guardian, even the novel's publishers hadn't been allowed to read it at the time of her interview — and Aitkenhead had to sign a raft of nondisclosure forms just to get her hands on it.

3. She's not worried about bad reviews.
"I just needed to write this book. I like it a lot, I'm proud of it, and that counts for me," Rowling tells the Guardian. But still: "The worst that can happen is that everyone says, 'Well, that was dreadful, she should have stuck to writing for kids,' and I can take that. SO, yeah. I'll put it out there, and if everyone says, 'Well, that's shockingly bad — back to wizards with you,' then obviously I won't be throwing a party. But I will live."

4. She doesn't look back on her teen years fondly.
Despite making a fortune chronicling a fantastical adolescence, Rowling didn't quite enjoy her youth — spent in an area very much like the fictitious town featured in The Casual Vacancy. In fact, she based the troubled teens featured in the novel on her own experiences and friends. "This was very much me vividly remembering what it was like to be a teenager, and it wasn't a particularly happy time in my life," she tells the Guardian. "In fact, you couldn't give me anything to make me go back to being a teenager. Never. No, I hated it."

5. Shockingly, it's expected to sell well.
Before its release, The Casual Vacancy spent more than 80 days in the top 100 of Amazon.com's sales ranks, hovering near the top as this week drew closer, and the book has already received more than 1 million pre-orders in the U.K. British bookseller Waterstones expects The Causal Vacancy to be "the best-selling fiction title this year."

J.K. Rowling ventures into adult themes like warfare, prostitution, heroin addiction and scandal in her new book. DEBRA HURFORD BROWN.

Don't hate him for being the Bachelor

Looking for love. Former CFL player Brad Smith just wants to find the right woman — with whom he can build a life

PHYLICIA TORREVILLAS
Metro Vancouver

Brad Smith doesn't care if you hate on him for choosing to search for love in a different way.

The former CFL wide receiver-turned-first Bachelor Canada just wants to find someone to start his life with.

"When you go in and see 25 girls, you're not looking to love all 25," Smith said Wednesday.

"You're just looking for that one who's going to be with you until the end and that's all that matters."

"You just have to be in the best situation to know yourself and what works for you so you can find that person," he added.

"If she's not there, then don't pick anybody."

The show hasn't even started yet, but the 28-year-old already has his fair share of haters and critics.

"I don't care (about) being made fun of or chirped," he said.

"I understand that comes with the ground. People are just naturally not going to like the fact that you've chosen to do this because they don't believe in it."

But he adds that there are twice as many who are totally behind him in his quest for love on a reality TV show, including his family (his dad is former CFL commissioner and senator Larry Smith) and his CFL buddies.

"I've got almost half of the Edmonton Eskimos team that are going to go my buddy's house to watch it every Wednesday night just because they're so excited," he said.

"They can make fun all they want, but they'll be there to support you. That's what boys are for."

The show won't be without the usual hot tub moments and kissing sessions, and Smith admits it'll be an "intensely awkward situation" for his parents to watch.

"But they understand that it's part of the process and they're cool with it," he said.

Quoted

"When you go in and see 25 girls, you're not looking to love all 25. You're just looking for that one who's going to be with you until the end and that's all that matters."

Canada's Bachelor Brad Smith, former CFL wide receiver for the Edmonton Eskimos

Survey says

A new survey from Match.com, an online dating site, reveals that, unlike the 25 lucky ladies who will be battling for the heart of the Bachelor Canada, less than one in 10 Canadian women would go on a reality series to find love. In fact, most single Canucks (45 per cent) believe a first date on national television would be the most intimidating type of romantic rendezvous. Match.com dove into their vault of Canadian data to determine which contestant is most likely to win Brad's heart — at least according to statistics.

- **Blondes rule.** Single Canadian chaps (41 per cent) prefer flaxen-haired females over brunettes and redheads, and 46 per cent of men prefer women who have "medium" length hair. Lucky for the brown-haired Bachelor, the opposite is true of Canadian women. The majority of single ladies (54 per cent) swoon over brown-haired men.
- **No jock love.** The football-playing Bachelor might not be so fortunate in the job department. Only seven per cent of single Canadian women think being an athlete is an attractive profession. Those contestants that are in the medical field or are self-employed may have a leg up; these are the two sexiest professions, according to single Canadian men.
- **Singles still believe.** An overwhelming 76 per cent of Canadian singles believe in soul mates.

And in America...

The next U.S. Bachelor is Sean Lowe, a former Kansas State linebacker. HANDOUT

ABC says the next star of The Bachelor will be Sean Lowe, who was dumped on The Bachelorette. The network says the 28-year-old Dallas businessman will be the one doing the choosing when The Bachelor returns for its 17th edition. On the eighth edition of The Bachelorette, Lowe confessed his love for Emily Maynard but was eliminated just before the finale. ABC says Lowe is ready to look for love again. The 6-foot-3 Texan was a linebacker for Kansas State and worked in finance and insurance before starting a custom furniture business. The Bachelor returns in January.

Details

- **The Bachelor Canada.** Premieres Wednesday, Oct. 3 at 9 p.m. EST/PT on Citytv. (Following the premiere, the series moves to its regular time slot Wednesdays at 9:30 p.m. EST/PST, beginning October 10.

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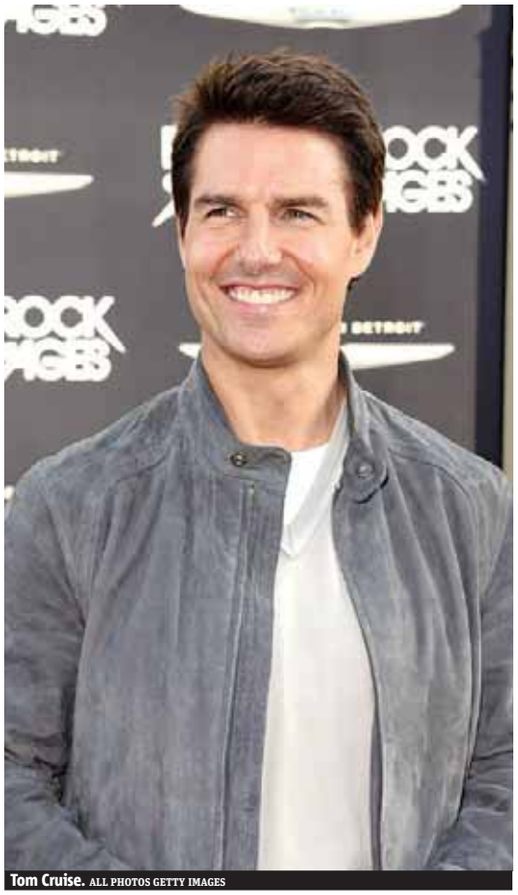
METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES



Tom Cruise. ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

Tom Cruise struggling with divorce

Tom Cruise is reportedly struggling with the stress of a busy work schedule that's keeping him in London and his daughter, Suri, living with soon-to-be ex-wife Katie Holmes in New York.

"I've got to see her," an emotional Cruise reportedly told a friend recently, according to People magazine. "I miss her."

Cruise last spent time with his 6-year-old daughter on August 5, and a mid-September trip to London for the girl was reportedly called off.

Still, despite the struggle for face-time, the actor is still keeping his daughter as a priority.

"I can tell you that I haven't had a meeting with Tom that was not interrupted by a phone call with his daughter," his friend, screenwriter Christopher McQuarrie said.

Quote

"I've got to see her. I miss her."

Tom Cruise
Talking about his daughter.

The Word

Reality television plots not real; sky still blue

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

The new issue of Us Weekly has a very entertaining cover story on how Bachelorette stars Emily Maynard and Jef Holm are faking their engagement.

I know, I know, It's hard to believe that two fame junkies pretended to be together on a rigged reality TV show to gain attention, but stay with me here.

Apparently, Holm's former girlfriend and current hook-up buddy (whom he was dating when he went on The Bachelorette) went into tell-all mode to Us Weekly.

The ex, Kaylee Shepherd, says that Holm revealed to her that he and Maynard are faking it. In August, a texting scandal hit — Maynard was caught sexting with another man, which Us Weekly, the Woodward and Bernstein of tabloids, uncovered.

Maynard, desperate to preserve her good girl image, hatched a plan to pay off Holm with half of her Bachelorette money.

"Jef said their relationship isn't what it seems. It's all basically for TV," Shepherd tells Us.

It's all basically for TV?

You don't say. Next thing you know, you'll be telling me some actors and actresses get plastic surgery and take too many prescription drugs in order to fill the dark void that being famous created. Stop ruining my happy place, Us Weekly.

Robert Pattinson and Kristen Stewart

Pattinson moving back in with Stewart

It looks like the reconciliation between Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson is complete, as Pattinson has reportedly moved back into the Los Angeles home they share, according to Us Weekly.

"They are living together and have reconciled," a source says, explaining that the pair recently "had a dramatic make-up."

But their relationship may still be on shaky ground in the wake of Stewart's cheating scandal, as the source says Pattinson "is extra-sensitive now. He's insecure."

Twitter

@kerrywashington
I met a very cute lizard today that needs a name. Suggestions?

@chelseahandler
I'm done with juice cleanses. I'm ditching gluten and dairy because apparently, I'm allergic to all things that give pleasure

@SethMacFarlane
Hey 30-year-old skating to work on a longboard: the world is sadder than you seem to realize. We had a 9/11 and everything.

@Joan_Rivers
Hillary Clinton is furious that Monica Lewinsky will earn millions for a book about sex with Bill because she's had to do it for free.

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On the web

Qriket

Stars put their spin on LA style and make it look livable

Mamma mia, Milan!

Drawing inspiration from Art Nouveau, vintage cinema, the streets of Sicily and the '60s, designers who debuted their wears at Milan Fashion Week made us pine for a sparkling spring to come

TAMU MCPHERSON
life@metronews.ca

Roberto Cavalli

Roberto Cavalli's strong references to swirly Art Nouveau prints could be read as a homage to female beauty. The impressive all-white opening — which included a short sleeve crocodile jacket, embroidered lace tunic, draped fringe pants, a crisply tailored jacket and trousers — was the perfect primer for the decadently intricate collection that followed. The silhouettes were sophisticated, clean, elongated, flowy and, as is customary with Cavalli, tastefully racy.

Moschino

For SS13, Moschino's Rossella Jardini drew inspiration from a patchwork of two films, namely Casino and Two for the Road. The result: everything went minimal from geometric lines to strong graphic elements. For colour, the brand references its iconic black-and-white combo and for brights pays homage to the colourful textiles of Ken Scott, a textile designer who lived in Italy for many years. There was a nod to the '60s too, with dress coats, cutout dresses, cropped trouser suits, trompe l'oeil shirt dresses, and bold stripes.

Versace

Donatella Versace showed a collection of strong tailoring and lingerie dressing in a colour palette of black, orange, blue, turquoise and nude. Classic menswear-inspired blazers were softened to a relaxed fit and adorned with lace inserts and cutouts. Slip dresses in crushed silk or tie-dye came slashed and held together with crisscross lacing, which also appeared on ultra-cool skinny trousers. For evening, sweeping chiffon gowns embellished with silver and gold fringing will surely sizzle on the red carpets.

Dolce & Gabbana

Have you ever been to Taormina in Sicily? No? Well, let Dolce & Gabbana take you there with their fun and colourful Spring 2013 collection. The duo took the audience from the Sicilian street theaters: wheelbarrows, elaborate wheels and Caltagirone ceramic heads to sun-drenched beaches with trendy beach umbrella and sunbed-style stripe pieces arriving in organza, rough, printed cotton, gold brocade and even Sicilian basket-esque raffia skirts and bustiers.

Giorgio Armani

Luminous and optimistic: the opening silk pearl-grey looks, all shown with trousers (wide and straight leg), arrived as a cloud's metaphorical silver lining. White shorts styled with soft-fitted jackets are unexpected but are nevertheless a special touch to this dressy collection. However, it was the evening wear that was gushingly beautiful with sparkly sequin beaded palazzo pants, shifts, jumpsuits, long-skirts, suits and dresses, to name but a few.

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NEW GENERATION OF REAL ESTATE

Young homebuyers are doing things a little bit differently than their parents when it comes to buying a home in Vancouver, according to Bob Rennie, director of Vancouver real estate marketing company Rennie Marketing Systems.

In the not-too-distant past (pre-2008), the majority of homes were bought by those who already owned homes. These buyers tended to purchase real estate that was more expensive than what they already had, said Rennie.

But that's stopping.

"The baby boomers have become so risk averse and they're so conservative now that they're buying down," he said. Baby boomers are downsizing, but they are also helping their children who have been affected by the recession by providing down payments.

Even without parents helping out, prices in Metro Vancouver remain affordable for younger people, he insisted. Approximately 15,000 condos were purchased in 2011 on an average income of $52.800, he said.

Though the average price of a condo was about $460,000 in 2011, the bottom 80 per cent of homes in Metro Vancouver sold for an average of $313,000, said Rennie.

"Those 15,000 condos is a lot of housing stock for local incomes," he said.

Affordability is a challenge in any major urban centre, Rennie explained. But negative media coverage of the real estate market can cause buyers to second-guess their prospective purchase — especially first-time buyers.

"One of the biggest challenges for today's buyer is to separate out the 'sound bites' from the facts," he said.

For many younger buyers, time is the ultimate luxury. They are looking for a place that's a close commute to work, school and family.

"Think transit, transit, transit," said Rennie.

Forgoing car travel helps first-time buyers afford a home, and local developers are heeding this trend by providing condos that don't include a parking space.

ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

Because of this, easy access to public transit is a basic criterion for any up-and-coming neighbourhood, said Rennie. That and a well developed retail community.

If Rennie could give advice to young homebuyers now, it would be, "Buy to 90 per cent of your income ability, not 100 per cent, in order to keep a lifestyle that makes you smile."

– Stephanie Orford

THE MOST COMPREHENSIVE LISTING OF NEW BUILD HOMES

BUZZBUZZHOME JUST A CLICK AWAY

BuzzBuzzHome is improving the way new construction homes are purchased and sold by bringing greater efficiency and transparency to the market.

The company launched in 2009 and quickly became one of North America's most popular websites for new condos, homes and townhouses.

BuzzBuzzHome allows purchasers to research new residential developments and connect directly with developers. It's also a social hub, facilitating discussion and knowledge exchange between buyers, builders and industry experts.

Metro Vancouver's real estate market is packed with new residential developments and it's easy for homebuyers to get lost in a sea of floor plans, renderings and price lists.

BuzzBuzzHome brings clarity to this search by listing every new home development in British Columbia and beyond. Listings are rich with content, ranging from photos and floor plans of architecturally stunning new condo developments in downtown Vancouver to detailed price lists for new townhomes in Surrey and Coquitlam.

Homebuyers may browse developments using BuzzBuzzHome's map-based search engine or simply stay informed of the latest real estate news and gossip with BuzzBuzzHome's blog.

BuzzBuzzHome facilitates direct communication between the homebuyer and builder and contact is initiated with a just a single click.

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BUZZBUZZHOME Vancouver's biggest list of new build homes.

SMART DESIGN = MC²

DEVELOPMENT IS BEAUTIFUL IN ITS SIMPLICITY

The most elegant solutions in physics and in life are often the simplest.

While some condo developments are attention grabbers with ornate or flashy designs, others are beautiful in their simplicity, allowing interior design, high-quality details and functionality to shine through. MC², a condo development on south Cambie Street in Vancouver, is decidedly one of the latter.

The two-tower development is named MC² after its location at Marine Drive and Cambie Street. And then, the company went on to have fun with the name based on Einstein's theory, e=mc², and the name seems to have really caught on. Its clean lines, quality concrete construction and high-standard finishings make it the ideal backdrop for any environment residents choose to create for themselves, explained Bob Rennie, owner/founder of Rennie Marketing Systems, the marketing company for MC².

"They've really, really stepped it up in terms of not only contemporary architecture, but with the interiors. Everything's very tailored," Rennie said.

"It gives you a nice backdrop for your life," he explained. "That was the whole philosophy behind MC²."

Armony Cucine kitchen cabinets, made in Italy, lend each condo a clean, minimalist look. Gourmet appliances including a Blomberg cooktop, convection oven, fridge and dishwasher, plus Caesarstone countertops provide an ideal set-up for those who love to cook and entertain.

MC²'s modern appearance is underpinned by insightful green design. The development is designed to LEED Gold equivalency, with energy efficient, European designed JAGA passive cooling units in all bedrooms, motion sensor lighting, high-water efficiency plumbing fixtures, Energy Star appliances, and a green podium roof on both the North and South towers.

The development was designed by James Cheng Architects, a well-known, Vancouver-based architecture firm whose other work includes the Shaw Tower, the Fairmont Pacific Rim and Vancouver's tallest building, the Shangri-La.

One-bedrooms start at 442 square feet and two-bedrooms range from 741 to 1,047 square feet. Generous outdoor balconies and patios provide functional outdoor living areas. The panoramic views don't hurt either.

Each building has a fitness centre and amenity room for residents' use.

Furthering the project's focus on good design, the property's landscaping and outdoor design will focus around an art installation by Vancouver-based artist Douglas Coupland.

Visit mc2living.com for details. The MC² presentation centre is located at 8160 Cambie St. at Marine Drive and open daily from noon to 6 p.m.

NEIGHBOURHOOD + AFFORDABILITY

With homes starting at $259,000 for a one-bedroom and $439,000 for a two-bedroom, MC²'s prices have undeniable draw.

"Over half of the 443 homes you can buy with an income of $60,000 a year," said Bob Rennie. He expects the average buyer to be relatively young, with different interests and values than their baby boomer parents.

Intracorp, the developer of MC², created 125 of the 443 condos in MC² without parking to bring the price down for buyers who weren't interested in owning a car, Rennie explained.

Accordingly, much of the shopping and entertainment MC² residents will enjoy doesn't require a car to access. Cineplex movie theatres, T&T Supermarket and other neighbourhood amenities are a short walk from MC², providing convenience and lots of choice in local shopping, eating and entertainment.

The neighbourhood, called the Cambie Corridor, was awakened from its status as a quiet suburb by the opening of the Canada Line SkyTrain along Cambie Street in 2009. Since then, Cambie Street has come into its own with a network of shops, restaurants and services clustered around each station.

"With transit comes density," Rennie explained. "The city's gone through a complete re-evaluation of that corridor and it's allowing for real energy centres like Marine and Cambie."

It's an advantage of MC² that shouldn't be underestimated.

Residents will also have many food, shopping and entertainment options just a few minutes away via SkyTrain.

Oakridge Shopping Centre at Oakridge-41st Avenue Station (a five-minute train ride away) is home to more than 100 diverse shops.

Broadway City Hall Station (a 10-minute train ride away) has blossomed into a major community hub since the Canada Line began operations, with many highly rated restaurants and coffee shops, and a burgeoning business centre.

Travel in the other direction on the SkyTrain and residents will experience the many flavours and shopping experiences Richmond has to offer. "If you get off at Brighouse Station (Richmond) you have over a million square feet of shopping and restaurants right there," Rennie said.

MC² has the rare combination of an up-and-coming neighbourhood and an affordable price.

TRANSIT, TRANSIT, TRANSIT

Today, having luxury at home isn't just about having fabulous interiors or a world-renowned architect. It's about the quality of life that your home allows you to have, 24/7. For Metro Vancouverites, quality of life in work and play means living near public transit.

"Living close to transit is a luxury," said Bob Rennie. "The future of housing is going to be transit oriented."

Homebuyers younger than the age of 28 don't look at cost as the major barrier to owning a car, he explained. They are more deterred by the inconvenience.

For MC² residents, Marine Drive SkyTrain Station is the key to freedom, located just across the street from the condo development. From Marine Drive Station, the world is their oyster. Downtown Vancouver is only 17 minutes away and the Vancouver International Airport is nine minutes away.

MC²

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RENNIE MARKETING SYSTEMS

A PLACE TO CALL HOME

QUATTRO 3 HELPS RESIDENTS SPLIT WORK AND PLAY

Some homes were meant as places to play. Whether it's a photography or painting studio, a writing nook or a home office, Quattro 3 homes were built to accommodate the creative.

The development, based in downtown Surrey, includes ground-floor live-work loft spaces meant for creative residents of all stripes. With loft studio space and a bedroom upstairs, the spaces help residents split work and play.

"This is something new in the city of Surrey," said Charan Sethi, president and CEO of Tien Sher Group of Companies. "If you were looking at a space like this in downtown Vancouver, you're looking at something like $500,000. Here, it's less than $300,000."

Tien Sher has already had buyers of these live/work suites who have moved from downtown Vancouver because the prices and accessibility were so appealing. "It saved them a couple hundred thousand dollars," said Sethi.

At the same time, residents of Quattro 3 are closely connected with downtown Vancouver, just 35 minutes by SkyTrain with the Gateway station only a seven-minute walk away.

The development has junior one-bedroom, one- or two-bedroom suites, as well as the live/work loft spaces. The homes start from $159,900.

Much like an artist's studio, all units feature nine-foot ceilings, giving the space an open feel. Quality features like granite countertops, ceramic tile and stainless steel appliances modernize the space — similar to their Yaletown equivalents, but at a far lower price.

Kitchens feature simple, high-quality wood-grain laminate cabinets. The slick, seven-piece appliance package from Whirlpool and Samsung includes a stainless steel self-cleaning stove with smooth top, a stainless steel built-in microwave-hood fan, a stainless steel dishwasher, and high-efficiency front-loading washers and dryers with vibration control technology.

"You can actually work out of the kitchen," said Sethi. "Some places put in smaller ovens and smaller fridges, which buyers sometimes only discover once they move in."

"But I love cooking, and every kitchen at Quattro 3 is designed specifically to provide a functional space for cooks. When your kitchen is equipped properly, it becomes a pleasure."

Quattro3 still has a variety of homes for sale. The Quattro Discovery Centre is located at 127–10788 Whalley Blvd., Surrey.

For more, call 604-581-8000.

A SENSE OF COMMUNITY

The city of Surrey is undergoing an evolution, and the change over the past 10 — even five — years is palpable.

The urban densification and update plan of Surrey Mayor Dianne Watts is well on its way to making the neighbourhood of Whalley the next up-and-coming downtown centre in Metro Vancouver.

Tien Sher is one of many companies developing property in downtown Surrey as part of this push. But the company isn't just putting up one building — it's building a master-planned community.

The project currently consists of the first three (of four) low- and mid-rise condo buildings, including Quattro3. Future phases of the project, situated on the site of Surrey's old Flamingo Hotel, will include four condo towers as well as townhomes and commercial space for smaller independent boutiques and coffee shops.

The vision is "Yaletown comes to Surrey," according to Charan Sethi, president and CEO of Tien Sher Group of Companies. That is, a modern, laid-back place where residents don't need to stray far from home to find interesting boutiques, highly rated restaurants and diverse entertainment.

"We're also interested in attracting a variety of age groups," said Sethi. "That's when the neighbourhood becomes interesting and vibrant."

Tien Sher is looking to incorporate boutique retail space into the towers — coffee shops, independent shops and restaurants.

The project made news headlines in 2007 when its first phase of 140 modest-priced homes sold out in four hours. A month later, its second building, with 116 homes, sold out in 67 minutes — a testament to Surrey's ever-increasing appeal and Tien Sher's quality home developments.

QUATTRO 3 SETS A NEW STANDARD IN CONDO CONSTRUCTION

Completed in August, Quattro 3 is the first six-storey wood-frame condominium building in Metro Vancouver.

The building has set a new construction standard for high-quality wood frame homes in the region.

This method of construction helps keep Quattro3's home prices more affordable for both homebuyers and investors, said Charan Sethi, president and CEO of Tien Sher Group of Companies.

"We've proven it can be done and we've gotten really good reviews from our new residents," said Sethi.

"We've been able to build some really nice homes for a really affordable price."

There are a number of benefits to building with wood, including lower costs and increased environmental sustainability.

"Since it's taken quite a bit of know-how to complete this project, we've gotten lots of questions and interest from our colleagues in the industry," said Sethi.

"Quattro 3 is a pioneering development here in Metro Vancouver."

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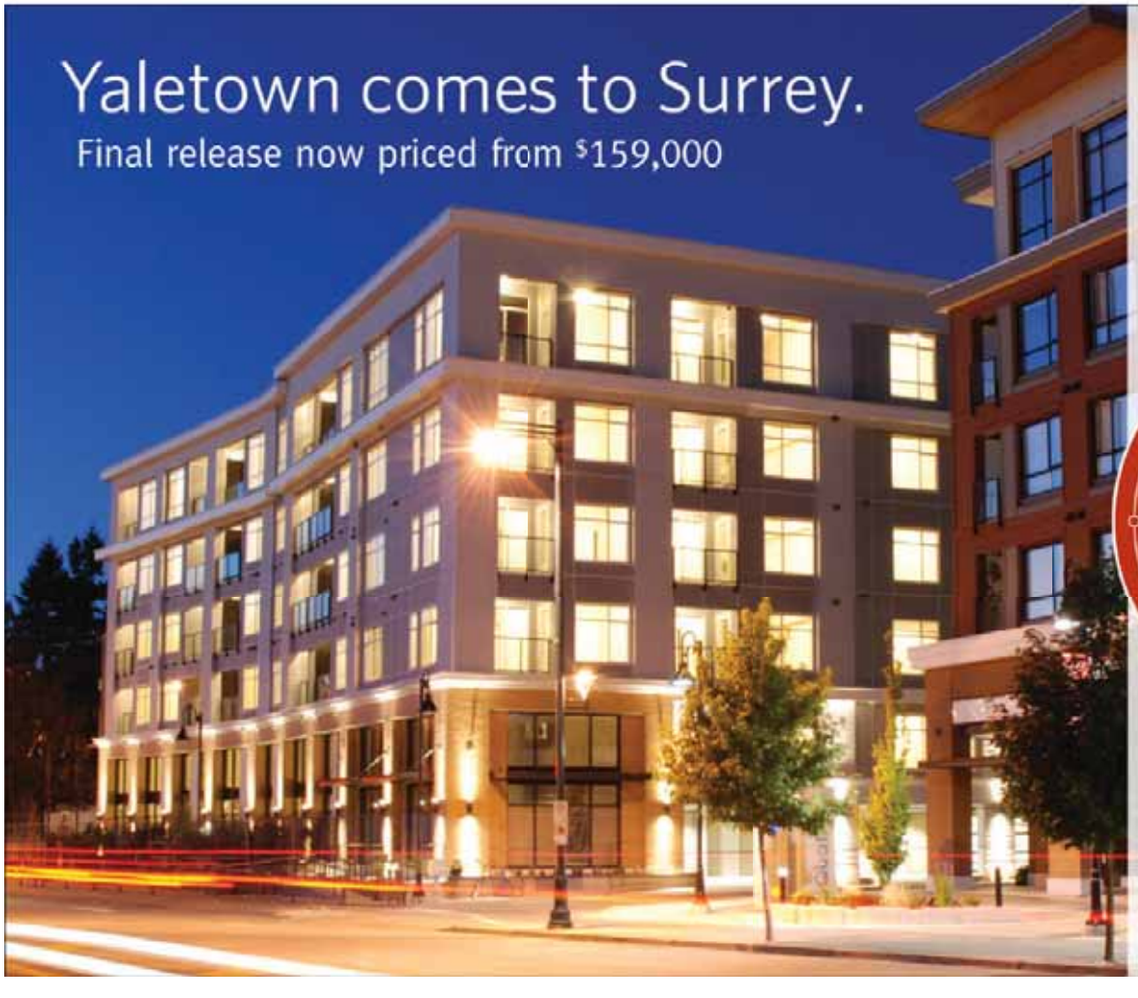
Yaletown comes to Surrey.

Final release now priced from $159,000



Quattro3
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Located in the new Surrey City Centre, Quattro3 is perfectly situated for the buyer who wants everything in walking distance. Gateway Skytrain station, City Centre Mall, Simon Fraser University Surrey Campus are only minutes away.

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*Subject to qualification

NEW REALITY OF HOUSING

BRICKSTONE WALK TOWNHOMES ARE FOR REAL PEOPLE WITH REAL STUFF

For those reading this article that may be younger than 40 years old, it's hard to imagine a time when the word "condo" did not exist. In reality, the idea of dividing up a building into separate, privately-owned homes is a relatively new idea and even the government department that registers home ownership had a hard time accepting the concept. While the idea of a "townhome" is less radical, most people still choose a single-family home on a big lot — if they have a choice. However, that may be changing.

Family housing styles that do not rely on cheap or plentiful land are now in style. A big yard is only cool if you really want it — and really want to cut the grass and maintain the flowers. Especially here on the West Coast where outdoor options are plentiful, do you really need to paint your own fence, or pull the weeds in order to feel closer to nature? Didn't think so. How about letting someone else do the work while you ski Whistler, bike ride down Cypress or walk around English Bay?

The idea of what a home is supposed to be, or what it represents has changed and array of choice has sprung up to meet that new reality.

The next question then is how big should a townhome be? Is the idea to be smaller and less expensive (by sharing the land value with other owners, townhomes are already less expensive) or is the idea to be large, luxurious and big enough for the whole family? Honestly, the trend for housing in the downtown core of most cities has been getting smaller. These well-designed homes are made to be affordable but seldom designed for families or those downsizing from a large, single-family home. In fact, in most urban areas, it's hard to find even a three-bedroom home, but the good news is, there is an option for you. Imagine a townhome big enough for your king-sized bed and your dresser and night tables. These are homes for real people with real stuff and designed to enhance your living experience instead of cramp your style.

Brickstone Walk II is a unique and boutique collection of townhomes designed for discerning buyers who want style, luxury and a great price. Right in the heart of the action in New Westminster, you can walk to the Theatre District, shopping, multiple SkyTrain stations, the Quay Market, and so much more. And the homes are big. Big enough for upsizing or downsizing — Brickstone was designed with real living in mind. All the luxury of granite, stainless and party sized entertainment areas, these one-, two- and three-bedroom homes are selling incredibly quickly. In fact, Brickstone Walk I was so popular that the developer was inspired to build more — and the rest, as they say, is history.

The Brickstone show home is located at 306 6th in New Westminster and open every day (except for Fridays) and anytime by appointment, of course, by calling 604-376-8060. It's worth a look online at brickstonewalk.com but better viewed in person.

Brickstone is modern and in the moment — a place you will be proud to call home.

BRICK STONE WALK 2

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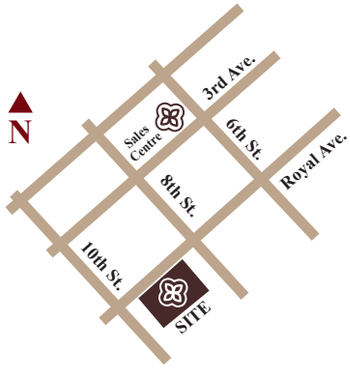

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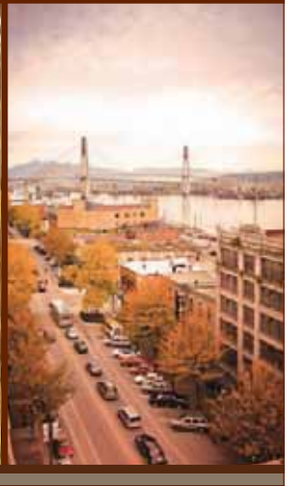

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FLEXIBLE LIVING

ELLIOT STREET'S LAYOUT AND PRICE POINT GIVES YOU A CHANCE TO PUT DOWN ROOTS

As society evolves, so must our living spaces. This is a concept that Vancouver-based Censorio Development Corp. has incorporated into its newest tower project, Elliot Street.

"It's definitely price-point driven, but the main thing is the flexible living spaces," says Peter Censorio, owner of Censorio Development Corp. "We want to shape how people live. We want to show people how your space can grow with you. It may start out as a one-bedroom, for a single person, but as they become a couple or young family, the space can adapt to their changing lifestyle."

Designed around flexible living, Elliot Street is a collection of 130 view homes located in downtown New Westminster. This project is perfect for first-time buyers looking for affordable ownership with interior finishings that exceed other options at this price point. Elliot Street's price point gives them an opportunity to enjoy ownership in an urban setting with easy access to transit and amenities.

Situated at the corner of Agnes Street and Elliot Street in New Westminster, this tower is ideally located in a quiet residential neighbourhood just steps away from the Columbia Street SkyTrain Station. Future residents will enjoy community amenities such as a new elementary school being constructed across the street as well as direct access to Albert Crescent Park.

Boasting some of the best views in the area, Elliot Street is the centre of an emerging neighbourhood poised for positive growth and success.

Through Elliot Street and other projects such as Altezza in Burnaby Heights, Censorio Development Corp. is redefining the traditional approach to real estate sales and home design.

"Our approach to our sales centres is different. We're making it more interactive by ensuring people feel more at home and more relaxed during the buying process," says Censorio.

The Elliot Street presentation centre will be located at 336 Columbia St., New West. For more information on Elliot Street visit censorio.com, or call 604-524-8080.

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What is the best carpet stain remover that I can buy? I live on a farm, and having a professional come clean my carpet would be very expensive. I would like to do this on my own, I just don't know what to do.

Dear Carpet Cleaner,
I personally do not believe in general carpet-cleaning products. What often happens is that if you actually have the right cleaner for the right stain, the cleaned area becomes bright and the remaining carpet stays dirty. When a professional cleans your carpet, first they treat the stain, then they traditionally clean the entire carpet area. This is the secret to avoiding discolouration.

What I have tried is a small hand-held carpet cleaner and at first I was convinced I would hate it. Yet, I soon fell in love! What I use most often is the suction part of the appliance as soon as the spill occurs, then get the excess liquid out very fast. This has worked a few miracles for me. With a few tougher stains with mud and dirt, I followed up with the cleaning formula and it worked like a charm. But be careful; you don't need to run out and buy the biggest, most expensive one. In fact a small hand held is all I think anyone has room for, and easy enough to use on furniture, and carpets.

Good Luck!

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Shower curtains

Downsides to using PVC

QUEEN OF GREEN
Lindsay Coulter
green@metronews.ca

**What's the eco-friendliest shower curtain?
Andrea of Ottawa**

I'll tell you what's not: PVC or plastic number 3. If you have a shower curtain made from polyvinyl chloride (PVC), you should recycle it.

Polyvinyl chloride is known to off-gas hormone disrupting phthalates. Phthalates are used to soften plastics. You'll know PVC from other popular plastic products like food wrap, teething rings, pet toys and blister packaging. Remember that smell when you first opened the package? It's not unlike that "new car smell." What you smell is the release of volatile organic compounds (VOCs), phthalates and metals.

In fact, a study by the Centre for Health, Environment and Justice found that these chemicals are released into the air inside our homes, contributing to indoor air pollution. PVC shower curtains can release as many as 108 volatile organic chemicals. Some of these chemicals are associated with developmental damage as well as damage to the liver and central nervous, respiratory, and reproductive systems. Not pretty.

Also, these chemicals are persistent. They were found in the air 28 days after a PVC shower curtain was unwrapped and hung! To prevent these chemicals from being released from PVC and ending up in our bodies and the environment it's best to choose an alternative.

Today, you can find shower curtains labelled PVC-free at most home-design or department stores. These are made from a plastic called PEVA (polyethylene vinyl acetate) — made without the chlorine molecules. But it's still plastic.

A newer option on the market is a hemp shower curtain. But before you fork out the 90-plus dollars for this natural, biodegradable option, make sure your bathroom is well ventilated. While hemp shower curtains are naturally mildew and mould-resistant, they need to be left open and aired out to dry and laundered regularly.

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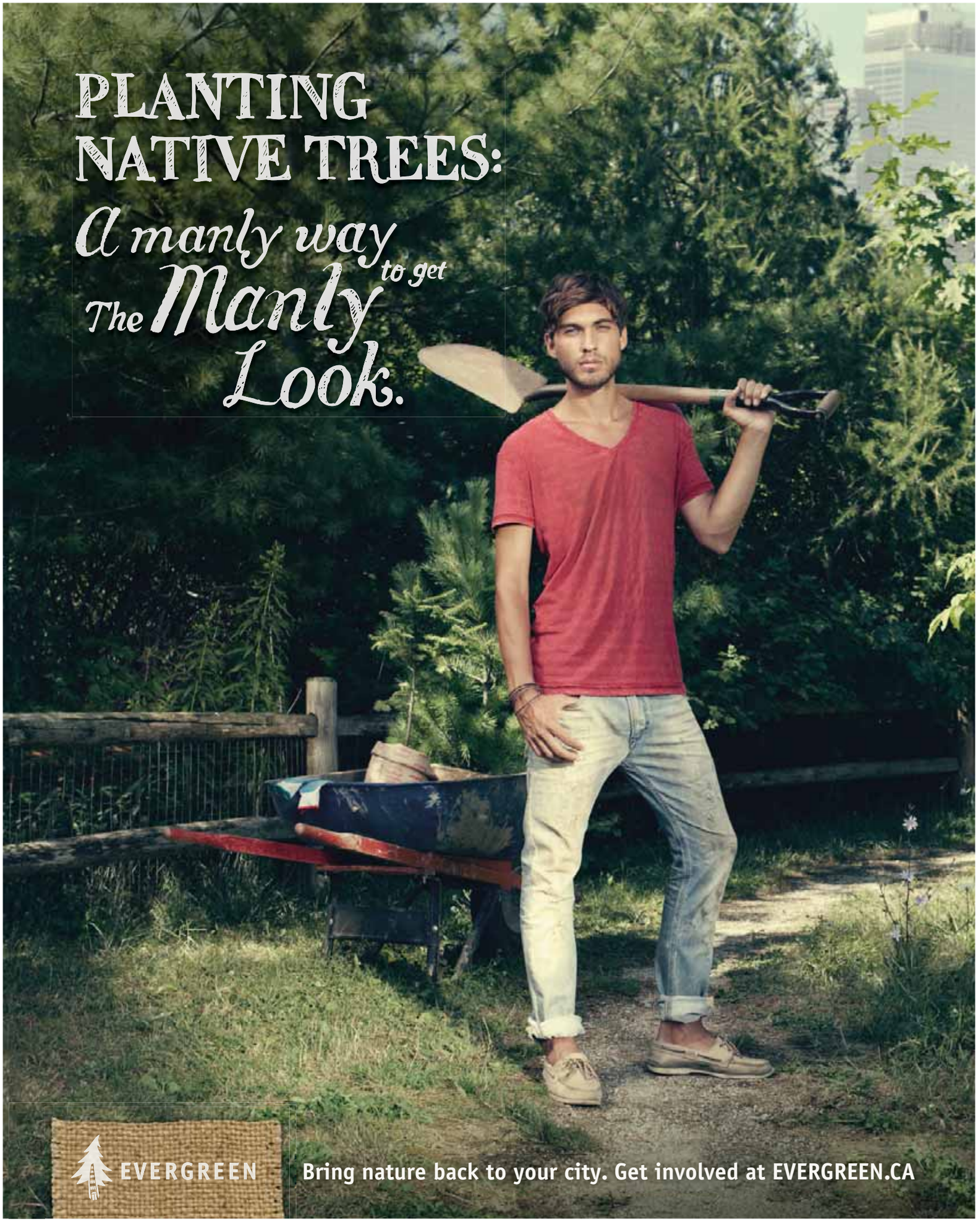
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Lemon Cornmeal Cookies: Pleasant change from traditional sweetness

Lemon Cornmeal Cookies

This recipe makes about 84 cookies. EDWARD POND

"These rustic cornmeal S-shaped cookies are a delicious change of pace from traditional sweet cookies," write the The Canadian Living Test Kitchen chefs in 150 Essential Whole Grains. "The cornmeal gives them a pleasant crunch that goes well with a cup of tea. Dust them with icing sugar, if desired."

Ingredients

- 1 1/3 cups all-purpose flour
- 1 1/3 cups fine stone-ground cornmeal
- 1 cup cold butter, cubed
- 3 egg yolks
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1 tsp grated lemon zest

1. In large bowl, whisk flour with cornmeal; using pastry blender or 2 knives, cut in butter until crumbly.

2. Beat together egg yolks, brown sugar and vanilla until thickened, about 5 minutes. Scrape over flour mixture. Add lemon zest; beat at medium speed just until blended. (Dough will be stiff.)

3. On work surface and working with 1/4 cup batter at a time, roll and shape into 15-inch (38 cm) long ropes. Cut into 3-inch (8 cm) lengths; bend into S shapes. Place, 1 inch (2.5 cm) apart, on parchment paper–lined rimless baking sheets. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

4. Bake in top and bottom thirds of 375 F (190 C) oven, rotating and switching pans halfway through, until golden, 10 to 12 minutes.

5. Let cool on pans on racks for 3 minutes. Transfer cookies to racks; let cool. (Make-ahead: Layer between waxed paper in airtight container and store for up to 4 days or freeze for up to 1 month.)

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Cookbook of the Week

Decoding ultra healthy foods

With Canadian Living's 150 Essential Whole Grain Recipes, incorporating superfoods into your everyday menus is easy.

The book clears up the mystery of cooking with grains and offers recipes that make the most of these nutritional powerhouses.

Each of the six informative chapters of this full-colour book focuses on a whole grain group. Chapters include: Whole Grain Basics, Wheat, Spelt and Kamut; Brown Rice and Wild Rice, Buckwheat and Rye, Quinoa, Corn and Millet; and Barley and Oats.

Tucked into each chapter are helpful sidebars profiling specific grains as well as expert cooking advice. METRO

The perfect partner for pork. Wheat Berry, Corn and Red Pepper Salad

"A tangy spiced vinaigrette gives this salad a touch of smokiness that complements the sweet corn and red pepper," write the The Canadian Living Test Kitchen chefs in 150 Essential Whole Grains. "Serve it with your favourite grilled or roasted pork dish."

This recipe serves eight. YVONNE DUIVENVOORDEN

Ingredients

- 1 cup soft wheat berries
- 1 cup frozen corn kernels
- 1 sweet red pepper, diced
- 4 green onions, sliced
- 5 leaves fresh basil, finely shredded
- Smoked Paprika

Vinaigrette

- 3 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, minced
- 1 tsp Dijon mustard
- 1/2 tsp smoked paprika
- 1/4 tsp each salt and pepper
- 3 tbsp vegetable oil

1. Smoked Paprika Vinaigrette: In large bowl, whisk together vinegar, garlic, mustard, paprika, salt and pepper; gradually whisk in oil. Set aside.

2. In saucepan of boiling salted water, cook wheat berries until tender, about 1 hour. Add corn; cook for 30 seconds. Drain and rinse under cold water; drain again and add to vinaigrette.

3. Add red pepper, green onions and basil; toss to combine. Cover and refrigerate for 1 hour.

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McIlroy focused on fitting in with the team

Golf. 'This week, I'm not the No. 1 player in the world,' young star says ahead of Ryder Cup

Rory McIlroy has gone from being a rookie in the Ryder Cup to a marked man at Medinah.

McIlroy is the first European in nearly 20 years to go into the Ryder Cup as the No. 1 player in the world, although the star power of this 23-year-old from Northern Ireland is about more than a ranking. He's already won two majors, with a record score in the U.S. Open last year and a record margin at the PGA Championship last month.

His four wins this year are the most in the world, all against the strongest fields.

So it was no surprise when Jim Furyk referred to Boy Wonder as the "present-day Tiger Woods" and a "marked man" at this Ryder Cup. That's the role Woods played for years in these matches when he dominated golf. There was a feeling among Europeans that beating Woods was worth more than one point because of the emotional lift it gave the rest of the team.

McIlroy doesn't see it that way. "This week I'm not the No. 1 player in the world," he said Wednesday. "I'm one person in a 12-man team, and that's it. It's a team effort. There's 12 guys all striving toward the same goal. I'm just part of that."

But even in this team competition, it's easy to get wrapped up in a single star.

There's only one way to keep score in the Ryder Cup, though it's tempting to make individuals accountable. Even when Woods was at his best, he still could only deliver a maximum of five points if he played every match. He never came close, and didn't produce a winning record until his fifth Ryder Cup.

"I don't have a number. I don't have a total," McIlroy said. "I think with the U.S. playing here at home, I think they are the favourites. It's a very strong team. So we know we have got to go out there and play very, very well to have a chance. So if I play on Friday morning, I just want to get my point and then take it from there." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Field of dreams

Both teams look strong with all 24 players among the top 35 in the world.

- The Americans are loaded with experience behind Tiger Woods, Jim Furyk and Phil Mickelson.
- Europe has only one Ryder Cup rookie, Nicolas Colsaerts, and has captured the cup six of the last eight times.

Rory McIlroy drives during the third preview day of the 39th Ryder Cup at Medinah Country Club, just outside of Chicago, on Wednesday. JAMIE SQUIRE/GETTY IMAGES

Quoted

"There's something about Ryder Cup which kind of intrigues me, how you can be great mates with somebody, but boy, do you want to kill them in Ryder Cup."

Englishman Ian Poulter on the intensity of international competition

MLB. Orioles crush Jays to keep pace with Yanks

Chris Davis and Manny Machado each connected twice, and the Baltimore Orioles tied a team record with seven home runs, routing Toronto 12-2 Wednesday night and staying within 1 1/2 games of the AL East lead.

The Orioles ended a two-game skid against the Jays to remain close to the division-leading New York Yankees, who won 8-2 in Minnesota.

Nate McLouth hit a leadoff shot in the first inning and Jim Thome and Mark Reynolds also homered. Baltimore has hit seven home runs three times, most recently on Aug. 26, 1985. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jays centre fielder Colby Rasmus reaches in vain for Nate McLouth's first-inning homer on Wednesday in Baltimore. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Figure skating

Former Canadian champ Phaneuf calls it a career

Two-time Canadian figure skating champion Cynthia Phaneuf is stepping away from the ice.

The 24-year-old from Sorel-Tracy, Que., announced her retirement on Wednesday, which came after a roller-coaster 2011-12 season nagged by lingering back pain and a coaching change.

Phaneuf, the Canadian champion in 2004 and 2011, was diagnosed with a stress fracture in her back over the summer. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NFL. League and referees reach tentative 8-year deal

The NFL and the referees' union reached a tentative contract agreement late Wednesday night, ending an impasse that began in June when the league locked out the officials and used replacements instead.

"Our officials will be back on the field starting tomorrow night" for the Cleveland-Baltimore game, commissioner Roger Goodell said. "We appreciate the commitment of the NFLRA in working through the issues to reach this important agreement."

With Goodell at the table, the sides concluded two days of talks with the announcement of a tentative eight-year deal, which must be ratified by 51 per cent of the union's 121 members. They plan to vote Friday.

"Our board of directors has unanimously approved taking this proposed CBA to the membership for a ratification vote," said Scott Green, president of the NFLRA. "We are glad to be getting back on the field for this week's games."

The replacements worked the first three weeks of games. After a missed call cost the Green Bay Packers a win on a chaotic final play at Seattle on Monday night, the two sides really got serious. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

4 SPORTS

Mobile sports

Qriket

Washington's Robert Griffin III is so good it hurts. The Redskins rookie quarterback has been taking a beating because he's so good at pretending that he still has the ball after he's handed it off.

B.C. defensive tackle Khalif Mitchell will miss Saturday's clash with Saskatchewan due to a thigh injury. LIAM RICHARDS/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Mitchell sidelined for Lions' clash with Riders

CFL. Temperamental B.C. defensive lineman to sit out Saturday's road game against Saskatchewan due to thigh injury

Khalif Mitchell is in the doghouse with his B.C. Lions coaches and teammates as well as the CFL over his actions last weekend in Edmonton.

But Mitchell, who was fined an undisclosed amount earlier this week for making throat-slashing gestures at the Eskimos, won't get a chance to make amends Saturday in Saskatchewan against the Roughriders. The defensive lineman will sit out with a thigh injury.

When he gets back, Lions coach Mike Benevides wants him to make sure he does not hurt the team.

The coach's message?

"Play the game like you love to play and we need you to play," said Benevides after practice Wednesday. "But after that, there's no need to put any other forces in place that will create a problem for him."

Mitchell was not on the field Wednesday but defended his actions a day earlier by saying he was making the sign of a cross and gesturing towards teammates, not the opposition. Mitchell's punishment came after he was suspended for two games in B.C.'s previous meeting with the Eskimos in July, when he twisted Edmonton offensive lineman Simeon Rottier's arm, hyperextending his elbow.

Mitchell, a 27-year-old Virginia Beach, Va., native who bypassed a chance to sign with the NFL's Miami Dolphins and remained with the Lions for a third season instead, is known for his outspoken ways and colourful personality.

At six-foot-five and 315 pounds, he is a gentle giant and self-trained concert pianist off the field, but ferocious and temperamental on it.

Benevides said he has no problems with the way Mitchell plays the game, but added the player has to understand what happens away from the play.

The absence of Mitchell's talent will be difficult to make up, but the West Division-leading Lions (9-3) were in the exact same situation before against the Riders (6-6). Rookie Jabar Westerman of Brampton, Ont., 22, replaced a suspended Mitchell against Saskatchewan in August and will again get the starting assignment.

Just as he did against the Riders in the previous game, Maurice Evans, a 24-year-old Brooklyn, N.Y., native, in his first year with the Lions, will again back up Westerman.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quoted

"There is nobody like Khalif Mitchell.... He's got a skill set that nobody else in this league has."

B.C. Lions coach Mike Benevides

NHL lockout

Yakupov's future up in the air

Nail Yakupov could be forced to return to the Ontario Hockey League if he wants to continue playing during the NHL lockout.

The flashy forward was suspended by the Russian-based KHL on Wednesday after it was revealed he didn't secure a transfer card to join Neftekhimik Nizhnekamsk. The International Ice Hockey Federation ruled he played illegally when he suited up for his hometown team in two games earlier this month, casting doubt over the immediate future of the NHL's most recent No. 1 pick.

At issue is who controls his playing rights.

Hockey Canada, which refused to sign off on Yakupov's transfer, and the Canadian Hockey League both believe he belongs with the Sarnia Sting. That issue was raised to the IIHF this week during its general congress in Tokyo, according to CHL president David Branch.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Horoscopes

Aries
March 21 - April 20
You will find yourself caught up in a conflict of some kind and you'll have no choice but to take sides. But which side to support? The one that is least likely to desert you in your own moment of need.

Taurus
April 21 - May 21
Apply common sense to whatever situation you find yourself in today. Also, make sure you keep your tongue firmly behind your teeth, whatever the provocation may be. This is not a good time to be honest!

Gemini
May 22 - June 21
It may be tempting to hit back at those who are giving you a hard time, but the more bad things you say now, the more work will have to be done later to patch things up. Let go of vengeful thoughts.

Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Cancer is a cardinal sign, which among other things means you are ready to fight for what you believe — and you may have to today. Don't let anyone take from you what you don't want to give — not now, not ever.

Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
No matter how strong you think your arguments may be, you cannot force others to do things they don't want to do and the sooner you accept that fact, the easier your life will be — and theirs too.

Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
If you know what is good for you, any chores and tasks that need doing will be left for the weekend. Today, your priority is to patch up a friendship or relationship that has been heading downhill.

Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Today's cosmic picture urges you to find a creative way to bleed off the anger and frustration that has been building up inside. Getting your feelings down on paper is an especially good idea — but don't publish them!

Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You are entitled to express your viewpoint forcefully but you are not entitled to stop others from expressing their opinions. Free speech is a right worth fighting for — for everyone, not just yourself.

Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
It may be the case that you have grown so comfortable doing something one way that you have failed to notice there are better ways to reach your goal. Move with the times. Not everything modern is bad.

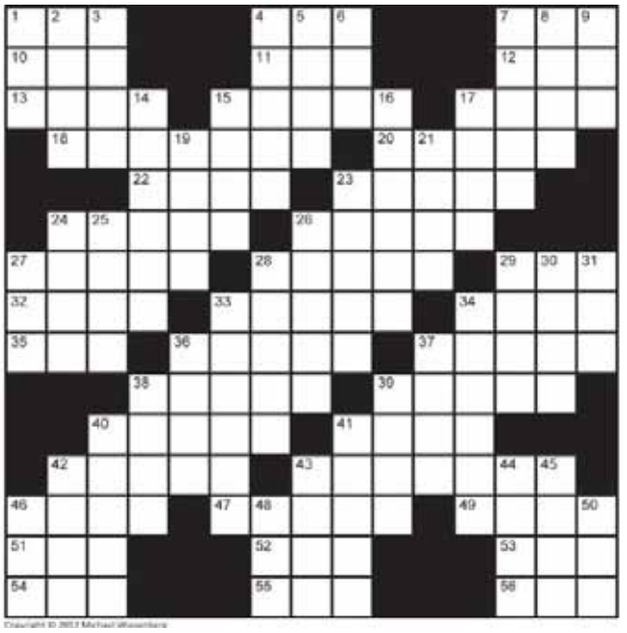
Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Being a Capricorn, you enjoy it when the odds are against you, as it gives you a chance to prove how dynamic you are. While others are complaining that life is too tough, you'll just be getting on with it.

Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
If you apply yourself to the problem at hand, it won't be a problem for long. There is a determination about Aquarius that helps you tackle issues that others too easily give up on. Show that resolve now.

Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
Take no notice of those who say you are being irresponsible. They are merely jealous. Today's planetary set-up means it is better to be a bit reckless than take no risks at all. Do what feels right — and do it now. SALLY BROMPTON

Olio Is a Mixture; the Other One's Here

BY MICHAEL WIESENBERG



Across
1. Our star
4. Official Parliament opposition: initialism
7. "Finger-lickin' good" restaurant: initialism
10. Sean Lennon's mother Yoko
11. Consume
12. Society page adjective that means "born" in French
13. Prevaricator
15. Halifax-born singer McLachlan
17. Remove outside layer, as from an apple
18. IMAX ___
20. Checks out suggestively
22. Grandson of Adam who reputedly lived to 905
23. Eightsome
24. Race, as an engine (2 wds.)
26. Territory whose capital is Whitehorse
27. Canadian military trainee
28. Distinct musical sounds
29. Apply gingerly, with "on"
32. Great poker start
33. Impertinent
34. Dorothy's dog
35. Iniquity site
36. Chile con ___
37. Cheech's Edmonton-born partner
38. "How are you ___?"
39. Oldsmobile model discontinued in 2004
40. "Mr. Tambourine Man" and "Mr. Spaceman" group, with "The"
41. Evidence of healing
42. Makes a run for it
43. Anthem with English and French versions (2 wds.)
46. Chunk of dirt
47. Traditional Stampeder rival
49. National Park just across the Alberta-BC border from Banff
51. Do this on bended knees
52. "Big" clock in London
53. And not
54. Audiophile's collection
55. Bon ___: witticism
56. Potato bud

Down
1. Our sun
2. Litre, metre, or tonne
3. Biblical ark builder
4. Approaches
5. "Bet you can't," e.g.
6. School fund-raising grp.
7. Committed a hockey infraction
8. Bank assessments
9. Cartoon collectible
14. Beirut-born Canadian star of *The Matrix* series Keanu
15. "Halt!"
16. What many consider Canada's national game
17. Architect's design
19. "What are you, some kind of ___?" (2 wds)
21. Bygone Pontiac muscle cars
23. 28.35 grams
24. 100-metre dash, e.g.
25. Where Adam and Eve started
26. Toronto-born Neil called "The Godfather of Grunge"
27. Bounder
28. England's Lake District lakes
29. Exit or entrance
30. ___ time: never (2 wds.)
31. Marsh
33. "Because I ___!": parent's response to "Why do I have to?" (2 wds.)
34. Canada's best known retailer, familiarly (2 wds.)
36. Apple eater's throwaway
37. Tribe
38. Not the original color
39. Hertz Rent-_-___
40. Promotes oneself online
41. A bloodhound follows one
42. Took off
43. Margarine
44. Finished
45. Sailor's hail
46. *This Hour Has 22 Minutes* network
48. PC maker
50. Bauxite or hematite

Yesterday's Crossword

What's online

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

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8		7			1		9	
				5	4			6
6				2		4		
		3					8	
		4	9		7	1		
	7					2		
		2		6				9
3			4	7				
	1		2			7		5

Yesterday's Sudoku

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